Commentary

VOLUME NINETY-ONE • NUMBER FIVE • MAY 1991

The Gulf War and...

■ **The Vietnam Paradigm**
Joshua Muravchik

■ **Television News**
John Corry

■ **American Blacks**
Arch Puddington

■ **Israel**
David Bar-Illan

Russian Politics in the Russian Classics
Jacques Barzun

Freddy and Me—A Story
Ellen Sussman

Books in Review:
Neal Kozodoy/Louis Winnick/
Charlotte Allen/Terry Eastland/Roger Kimball

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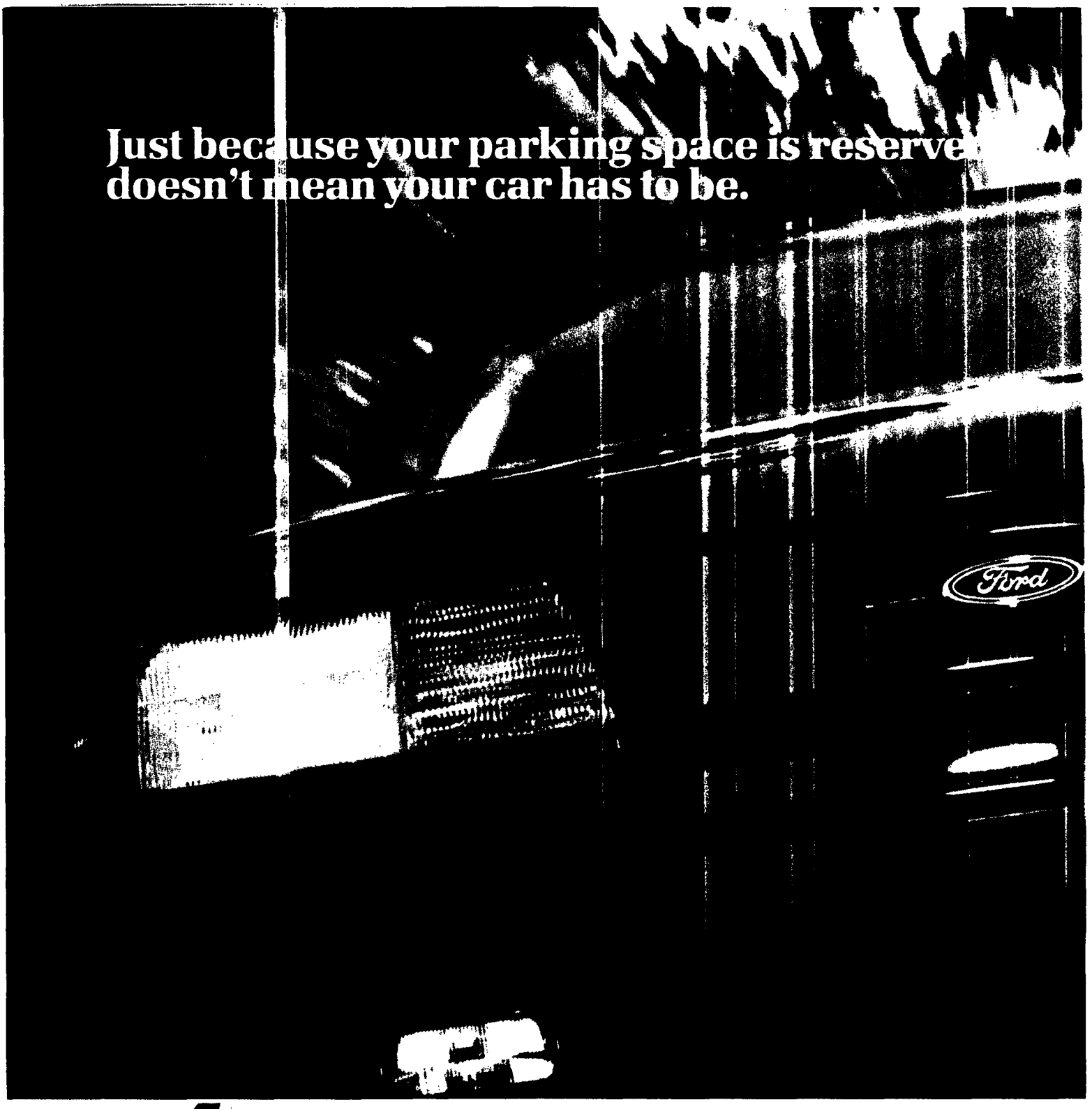

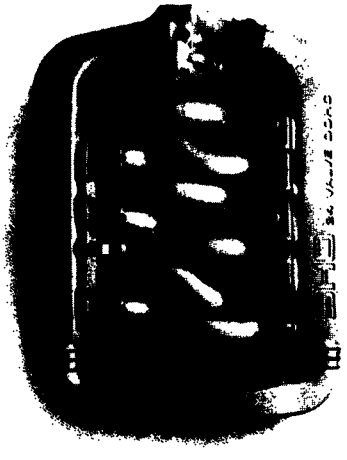

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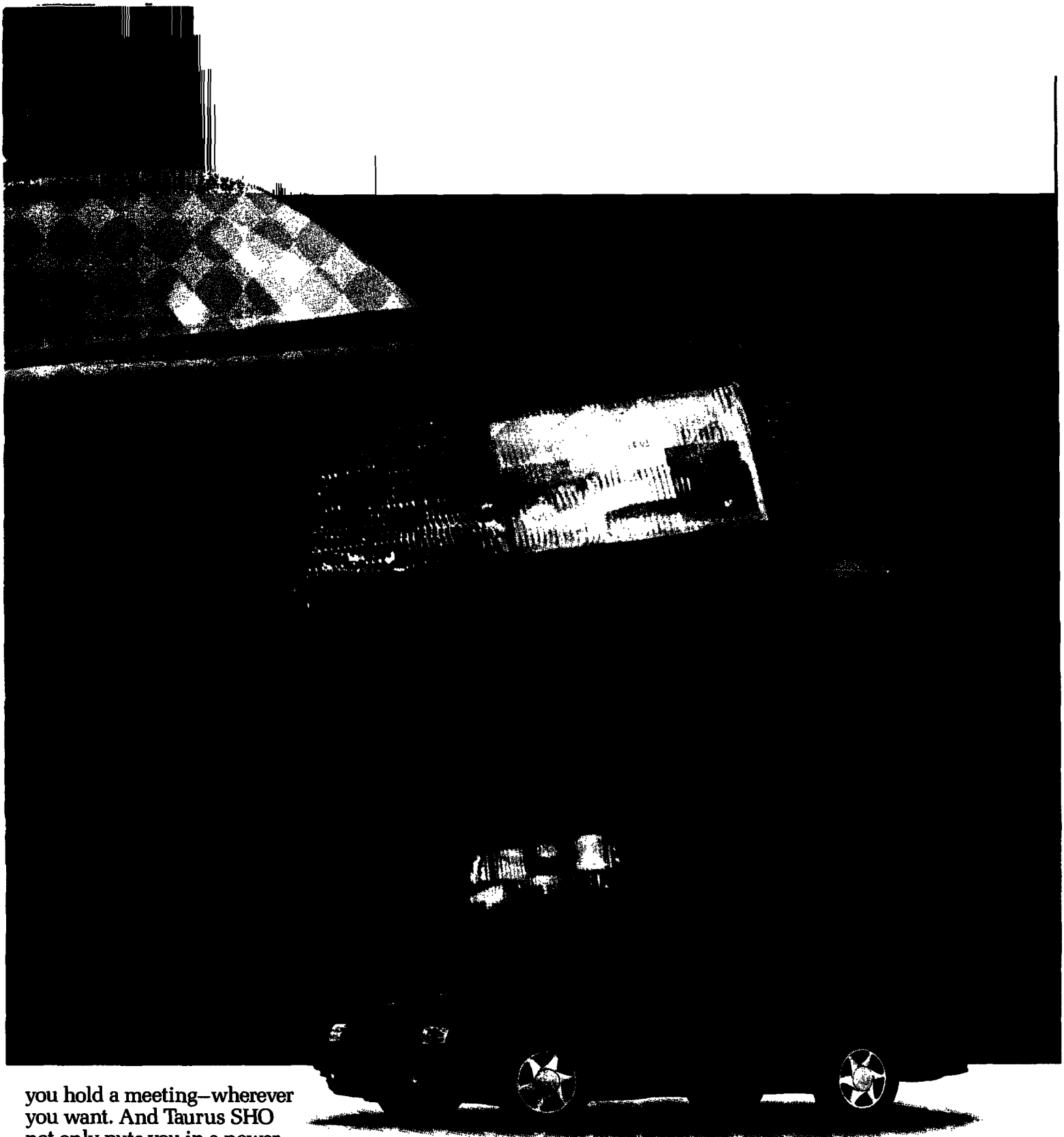

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Commentary

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Editor-in-Chief
Norman Podhoretz

Editor
Neal Kozodoy

Managing Editor: Marion Magid
Associate Editor: Brenda Brown
Publishing Director: Steven Pippin
Advertising Director: Sarah M. Stern

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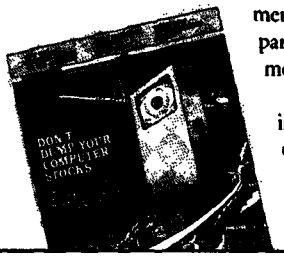

The applications for computer imaging systems are so dazzling that one day nearly every office worker could be connected to or near one. What all this means to a sluggish computer industry is growth. The kind of growth that will propel it into the year 2000, and beyond. The Forbes article contradicts Wall Street's conclusion that computers are just another cyclical capital goods industry.

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Letters from Readers

Buchanan Pro & Con

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

To make the case that Patrick J. Buchanan is anti-Semitic, it is necessary for Joshua Muravchik ["Patrick J. Buchanan and the Jews," January] to clear away the inconvenient underbrush of Buchanan's support for Israel during the 70's and early 80's. He attempts this by exploring Buchanan's columns of that period and extracting fragments critical of Israel.

Mr. Muravchik himself concedes "that in earlier years Buchanan had produced columns friendly to Israel. . . ." That he does not attempt a qualitative and quantitative analysis of pro and con in Buchanan's written work during that period is not worthy of Mr. Muravchik's usual careful journalism.

In fact, Buchanan's overall thrust then was heavily in favor of Israel. Before entering the White House in 1985, his orientation was strongly pro-Zionist both in disputing me on *The McLaughlin Group* and debating Tom Braden on *Crossfire*.

By definition, no sympathizer with the Zionist cause can be an anti-Semite. It is ludicrous to state that Buchanan suddenly started hating Jews because he changed his mind on Israeli policy. That fatally undermines the rest of Mr. Muravchik's case.

ROBERT D. NOVAK
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . It was incredibly tiresome to read Joshua Muravchik's article—an assembly of circumstantial tidbits, patched together with 20-20 hindsight, and meant to show that Patrick J. Buchanan is anti-Semitic in his heart of hearts.

Simply pointing out that a man in the course of two decades is often inconsistent in his opinions, that he changes his mind and his rhetoric, that he has a pugnacious style, only proves that he is like the rest of us who drift and dodge and dance, but also think and feel from the heart as best we can over the years. Buchanan, however, has a cultivated gift of rhetoric and a love for the well-turned phrase. The plain fact is that Buchanan, like most good columnists and speechwriters, has so many words on record that anyone with a little skill and time can selectively extract enough "evidence" to prove consistency or inconsistency on selective issues. . . .

Mr. Muravchik . . . even goes so far as to question Buchanan's motives based on the riveting discovery that Buchanan's mother was German, which is supposed to explain some of the most egregious aspects of his politically incorrect opinions. . . .

I do not believe for a moment that Buchanan is anti-Semitic, and nothing in the article convinced me. To the contrary, Buchanan is a rare personality among the journalistic stuffed shirts in Washington who take themselves so seriously. . . .

MARK R. MASTERSON
Kingston, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I do not agree with all of the opinions of Patrick J. Buchanan that Joshua Muravchik describes. However, I regard them all as within the domain of reasonable debate. I was therefore quite startled by Mr. Muravchik's last paragraph, wherein he concludes that those opinions are sufficient to establish Buchanan as an anti-Semite, specifically with "an embedded hatred of Jewish people. . . ." It seems to me that this stretches the meaning of "anti-Semite" in much the same way that "racist" and "sexist" have been expanded to apply to anyone opposed to affirmative-action quotas. Such expanded usage dilutes the meaning of the words to the extent that calling someone a "racist," "sexist," or "anti-Semite" has no more meaning than just calling him "nasty." Such heavy-handed polemics should be left to other magazines. The nasty ones.

PHIL SHAW
San Jose, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Who said this?

> The daring Israeli raid upon Entebbe airfield in Uganda calls to mind the audacity of Otto Skorzeny's wartime rescue of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, and the United States helicopter raid on the Son Tay prisoner-of-war camp outside Hanoi.
>
> Unlike the latter, however, the Israeli raid was a brilliant success. Unlike the former, it was done in the noblest of causes—the rescue of unarmed civilians from cutthroats and thugs.

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And who said this?

> At the UN, the British and the French are supporting a resolution to have Israel pay reparations to Iraq for the June 7 [1981] strike on the Osirak reactor by Menachem Begin's Flying Circus of F-15s and F-16s in that all-American air show over Baghdad. . . .
>
> To accept Saddam Hussein of Iraq as an injured party, however, requires some suspension of disbelief. After all, not for nothing has Iraq been called the "North Korea of the Middle East." Not only did that regime fall upon Iran, in violation of its treaty, but its leaders boast of being in a state of war with Israel, the final solution to which is to be liquidation of the "racist Zionist entity." Presumably, people who declare wars against their neighbors should expect the consequences as well as the applause.

And this?

> Israel remains a tough, resourceful, energetic nation, an offspring of the West . . . whose current struggle merits sympathy and support. . . .

You would never have guessed from Joshua Muravchik's article that Patrick J. Buchanan had ever uttered such sympathetic statements about Israel. Nor would you have known that even the Anti-Defamation League in its now-famous September 1990 memo on Buchanan did not say he was anti-Israel, only that his "position on Israel has been inconsistent." Is inconsistency now considered "anti-Semitism"? Is Buchanan to be labeled "anti-Semitic" because he now believes peace in the Middle East will not come until the Palestinian problem is resolved and that Israel must do more to resolve it?

"Should American Nazis," Buchanan has written,

> be permitted to parade, swastikas flying, through the Chicago suburb of Skokie, home of thousands of Jews and former inmates of Hitler's death camps? The absolutist wing of the American Civil Liberties Union has answered that question in the affirmative. . . . Because it has, membership is declining and financial support is drying up. As it should.

Just two years ago, Buchanan was harshly condemning the atheist Friedrich Nietzsche for being "anti-Semitic" and one of several "beacons to Hitler." Another atheist, Karl Marx, he noted in the same column, "was a vicious anti-Semite" who midwifed Mao Zedong and Joseph Stalin.

How do such remarks fit in with Mr. Muravchik's astonishing theory that Buchanan is guilty of his own definition of anti-Semitism, "an embedded hatred of Jewish people, manifest in writing and conduct, . . . a grave sin"?

Surely, if someone were so hostile to Jews, Mr. Muravchik could have dug up somebody to say that Buchanan is a smoldering Jew-hater, a man who reveals intense hostility to someone because he is Jewish. Yet Mr. Muravchik comes up empty-handed. And, of course, there are numerous Jewish friends of Buchanan's—including this one—who vigorously deny the anti-Semitic charge.

Mr. Muravchik's charges just don't stand up. Did Buchanan shift to a dovish stance during the Iraqi invasion because he is anti-Israel? How, then, explain Buchanan's thesis, spelled out in countless articles and publications prior to Saddam Hussein's brutal conquest, that, if the cold war is over, we should begin disentangling ourselves from obligations around the world? . . .

If he is so "pro-German," why has he consistently bashed the Germans for not doing more during the Persian Gulf crisis? If his defense of Karl Linnas and John Demjanjuk is somehow anti-Semitic, tell me, please, why the Washington *Post*—not precisely the voice of Adolf Hitler—editorially opposed Linnas's deportation and ran Buchanan's defense of Demjanjuk?

I am normally a fan of both Norman Podhoretz and Joshua Muravchik, but, in this case, I believe, they have made a grave error in judgment. Just as Buchanan is quick to assail anyone who challenges the Pope or the Catholic Church—too quick to my mind—so Messrs. Podhoretz and Muravchik are too ready to detect "anti-Semitism" in people because they have an honest quarrel with Israel and/or the Jewish community on substantive issues.

Unfortunately, I don't think such articles lessen anti-Semitism, they promote it.

ALLAN H. RYSKIND
Human Events
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joshua Muravchik's article was interesting and well-researched, but I believe Patrick J. Buchanan's positions would need further scrutiny to justify some of the accusations that have been made.

To begin with, Mr. Muravchik proclaims that Buchanan is inconsistent because he is a dove with respect to the situation in the Persian Gulf but would be the first to beat the drums of war if a Communist dictator were involved. But Buchanan is not being inconsistent here. He believes the cold war was the only justification for U.S. interventionism and with that all but behind us, it is time for "America First" neo-isolationism. . . .

As far as Israel is concerned, Buchanan still favors military aid, and maintains Israel's right to exist. . . . And he has condemned the double standard at the UN which overlooks Marxist and Arab atrocities yet condemns Israel for far less serious infractions of human rights and international law. . . .

With respect to the Demjanjuk case, Buchanan is not defending Nazism but simply questioning some of the motives and grounds that have been used to identify Nazis. Mr. Muravchik implies that Buchanan was the only one writing that Karl Linnas should not be deported, but William F. Buckley, Jr. was also against Linnas's deportation. . . . And Buchanan's courage in this matter has paid off. Many now question the judgment that Demjanjuk was the infamous Ivan the Terrible, and new evidence that has now come to light may reopen the case. If Demjanjuk is eventually cleared, it is hoped that those who castigated Buchanan for defending him will have enough class to admit their mistakes. . . .

Patrick J. Buchanan is not an anti-Semite. He does shoot from the hip sometimes, but it is . . . hard for me to believe he does not like Jews when he has friends like Howard Phillips, Burt Blumert, and Murray Rothbard supporting him for President. If he is so anti-Israel, why did he work for two very pro-Israel administrations? And last but not least, if he is so opposed to Jews, why did he support and have as a hero, to this day, a man who is of Jewish ancestry—Barry Goldwater?

ANDREW J. MURPHY
Memphis, Tennessee

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joshua Muravchik closes with an attack upon Patrick J. Buchanan's position on the fate of several per-

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sons accused of being Nazi war criminals. The attack is quite strong and serves as the basis for Mr. Muravchik's conclusion that Buchanan is, in fact, an anti-Semite. For Mr. Muravchik's conclusion to stand he must establish that Buchanan is wrong about these accused war criminals. . . .

Let us now turn to the facts in the cases cited. John Demjanjuk has been stripped of his U.S. citizenship, deported, and sentenced to death on the basis of two items of evidence. The first are 40-year-old eyewitness accounts of his alleged acts. The second are documents proffered by the USSR.

Eyewitness identification is very tricky even when it is fresh, but to believe that a sixty-year-old man looks the same way he looked when he was twenty is difficult.

As for documents from the USSR, before the advent of the Gorbachev reforms, the USSR was a criminal state which based its every action on advancing what it perceived to be its own interest. For the USSR to have turned over documents to the West, a decision had to be made at a high level that the conviction of the accused was in the interests of the USSR. . . . If actual documents existed they might be turned over, but it is more likely that forged documents would be supplied. . . . In any event, documents which came out of the USSR have no probative value in any real court of law and ought to be ignored. This leaves the entire case against John Demjanjuk based upon eyewitness testimony that is not reliable.

But there is more. Demjanjuk has never behaved like a guilty man. He came to the U.S. and openly lived under his own name. Had he really been the evil monster he is supposed to be, he would have changed his name and moved to Argentina. Similarly, he has continued to profess his innocence. Were he guilty, he would plead for mercy and claim that he had no choice as to what he did.

The trial of Demjanjuk was also a farce. The only question was whether he was the person he was accused of being. The entire trial should have been about whether the Soviet-supplied documents were enough to take a man's life. In fact, the trial was a show trial designed to serve as a history lesson for the youth of Israel. When the USSR staged show trials men of good will protested. When Israel stages show trials those who protest are called anti-Semitic. The hatreds and emotions stirred up at the Demjanjuk trial were so extreme that they resulted in the throwing of acid in the face of one of his lawyers.

In the Linnas case much the same argument can be made. There is, admittedly, more evidence of guilt in this case than in the Demjanjuk case, [but] . . . all the "evidence" against Linnas was in the form of testimony collected in pre-Gorbachev Soviet courts by Soviet lawyers. In all these hearings Linnas was referred to as the "fascist war criminal." It is also interesting to note that the Soviets never executed Linnas. He died of alcoholism in a Soviet prison. The Soviets also permitted his family to see him before he died. It seems that the Soviet Union of Gorbachev is more decent than the U.S. of Elizabeth Holtzman, who devoted so much effort to having Linnas deported. This, of course, is the same Elizabeth Holtzman who, in 1975, attended a Central Park rally to celebrate the fall of South Vietnam to the Communists.

Calling someone an anti-Semite is an act which for all intents and purposes ends discussion of the issues. On campus we cease talking when we are called racist, homophobic, sexist, or whatever neologism the purveyors of politically-correct thought have come up with. If it is wrong for the Left to brand us homophobic because we don't want to pay for the treatment of AIDS, a disease brought on by volitional behavior, we ought to abstain from labeling someone an anti-Semite merely because he argues for a point of view with which we do not agree. . . .

We in the neoconservative movement have fought for years on the campuses against an intellectual creed which replaces arguments based on fact with labeling. Yet now our flagship publication is doing just that to Patrick J. Buchanan. I have followed Buchanan closely for four years now. . . . He has his agenda and I have seen no indication that anti-Semitism is part of that agenda. Arguably, he is insensitive to Jewish concerns, but he is also insensitive to the concerns of all those with whom he disagrees. He seeks to lead a nationalistic American revolution against the forces of the Left which are corrupting and destroying this country. Isn't this exactly what COMMENTARY has been doing for a number of years? . . .

SUSAN JORDAN
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

After trudging through several thousand columns, books, and television appearances by Patrick J. Buchanan, Joshua Muravchik accuses him of "apparently" thinking this and "seemingly" thinking that, "flirting with" this and coming "perilously close" to that. Like the psychiatrists who declared Barry Goldwater all-but-insane (a man who, if elected, would get us into war in Vietnam!), Mr. Muravchik has performed psychoanalysis without meeting the patient. He has found anti-Semitism where Buchanan's friends and colleagues, Gentile and Jew alike, find none.

Mr. Muravchik finds great significance in the fact that "Buchanan is often taken for Irish. He is, however, more German than anything else. . . . His mother's lineage is German on both sides." Oh, of course. He has German blood; that explains everything, including his (obviously anti-Semitic!) support for the reunification of Germany.

But it does not explain why Buchanan blasts the Germans repeatedly and consistently for free-loading off Uncle Sam, for failing to provide adequately for their own defense and for the defense of their own oil supplies. The idea that his views on the Persian Gulf crisis are founded in anti-Semitism is flatly contradicted by his support for an "America First" defense policy—one that brings the boys home not just from Saudi Arabia, but from Germany and Japan as well.

Nor does his (tainted?) blood explain why, for many years, he defended Israel from the rhetorical attacks of the American Left. If he's a born anti-Semite, he must be a late bloomer.

Perhaps Buchanan's supposed anti-Semitism stems from his Catholicism. Mr. Muravchik catches him red-handed defending the grass-roots Catholic position in the matter of the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz. He nabs him in the act of stating correctly that the media get away with slurs toward Catholics and Christians of a sort that Jews would never tolerate.

But how do you explain other supposed outrages—Buchanan trying to explain the motivations of Arafat and the PLO, or calling

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Hitler a skilled orator and political organizer as well as a racist mass-murderer, or suggesting that American standards of justice be applied to the trial of accused Nazis? . . .

How do you explain the Buchanan view (re Bitburg) that Hitler, Stalin, Mao, and the other totalitarians, not the seventeen-year-old conscripts in their armies, are the main enemies of mankind? How do you explain my favorite of Mr. Muravchik's outrages, that Buchanan—"someone who presents himself as an ardent patriot"—questioned the motives of the British empire circa 1914? No real American would do that, right?

I think the problem is that Mr. Muravchik, like many others, fails to understand Buchanan's style. The fact is, you could sift through his columns and commentaries and "prove" that he is anti-German, anti-Japanese, anti-African-American, anti-Southern, even anti-Catholic. (Read some of his writings about *Catholic* leaders.) He is none of these. He is a polemicist from the take-no-prisoners school. He fires both barrels every time he opens his mouth or takes pen in hand.

And he takes up unpopular causes; he isn't always right, but usually he is. Usually, he is the one person we can depend on to have the courage to offend—or even, as Mr. Muravchik puts it, to tweak.

Mr. Sensitive he ain't, and thank goodness for that! We've got enough editorialists who hem and haw and refuse to put their convictions on the line. If he thinks the evidence against Demjanjuk is, like *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a Russian forgery, he says so.

To those who would impose a mindless orthodoxy on public debate, Buchanan is a dangerous man. That's why someone kept voluminous files on him, mailed copies of selected pieces to the news media, and tried to have his column blacklisted. That's why now, years after he was appointed communications director at the White House, years after his newspaper column and *Crossfire*, *The McLaughlin Group*, and *The Capital Gang* gave him the biggest soapbox in America, suddenly we see this anti-Buchanan campaign. It began the moment he became the leading critic of administration policy in the Persian Gulf.

The important test for Buchanan is in the marketplace of ideas.

A few years ago, after I wrote about Stalin's murder of millions of Ukrainians, a nationally syndicated columnist accused me of trying to "downplay the Holocaust" with my story. I was doing no such thing, of course, and I was later proven right about Stalin's crimes. That's the way the marketplace works.

Buchanan is not some midnight pamphleteer working out of his garage. His every utterance is recorded and analyzed. If he were an anti-Semite, it would be obvious; that is not the sort of thing you can hide when you are on television seven days a week, any more than Dan Rather and Bryant Gumbel can hide their biases. If Buchanan were an anti-Semite, he would have been laughed out of the newspapers and off the tube long ago. The reason no one has found a smoking gun—no "Hymietown," no "gutter religion" remark—is that there isn't one to be found.

Mr. Muravchik charges specifically that Patrick J. Buchanan is filled with "an embedded hatred of Jewish people, manifest in writing and conduct. . . ." If that charge is true, it means that he hates Jews, but cleverly hides that hatred from his readers and viewers and friends and colleagues and everyone who knows him. How fiendish!

RICHARD A. VIGUERIE
United Conservatives of America
Falls Church, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is a shame that Joshua Muravchik, in his otherwise thorough and insightful examination of Patrick J. Buchanan in light of recent accusations of anti-Semitism, resorts to ethnic stereotyping by revealing that Buchanan is "more German" than Irish in spite of his name. It is as inappropriate to conclude that Buchanan's ethnic lineage predicts his sympathies toward Germany as it is to insinuate that American Jews put Israel's interests first . . .

PATRICK J. MCNALLY
Western Springs, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joshua Muravchik's attack on Patrick J. Buchanan includes half-truths that it would take reams of paper to refute in their entirety. I shall, therefore, limit myself to only a few of his charges. . . .

Why does Mr. Muravchik take offense at Buchanan for quoting Kurt Glaser's judgment that Germans, like Russians, were the "victims of totalitarianism"? Many Germans and Russians were precisely that, and most Germans were not responsible for Hitler's crimes, except insofar as they failed to overthrow a murderous tyranny. Nor does Buchanan's citation from Glaser signify agreement with everything written by the same author. Glaser is foolish to suggest that both sides were equally guilty of inflicting destruction, and Mr. Muravchik may be right in challenging Glaser's motives for making such a statement. Even so, there were undoubtedly war atrocities (does Mr. Muravchik dispute this?) committed by the Allies as well as the Axis. Both sides during World War II engaged in fire-bombing and the indiscriminate killing of civilian populations. Moreover, millions of Germans, including social democrats like Mr. Muravchik, were expelled from their homes by Communist-guided regimes throughout Eastern Europe from 1945 on. The same regimes confiscated their victims' properties and did so on a massive scale in annexing former German territories. To Mr. Muravchik's horror, Buchanan noted that Helmut Kohl would have been justified in raising such issues in his negotiations with the Poles and the Czechs. . . . It seems churlish to scold Buchanan for alluding to atrocities that do not interest Mr. Muravchik because they happened to Germans.

I am also troubled by Mr. Muravchik's almost prurient fascination with Buchanan's German antecedents. Does this trace of German blood help confirm the charge of anti-Semitism? Supposedly it does, as evidenced by the fact that the Buchanan family did not like Woodrow Wilson. My own family, which fled from the Nazis, despised Wilson for making war on the Austro-Hungarian empire. Mr. Muravchik is . . . entitled to think differently about the anti-Semitic Negrophobe who schemed with Robert Lansing to push America into World War I, but I am not sure that disliking Wilson tells anything about one's feeling toward Jews. In any case, Buchanan takes a position on World War I that Mr. Muravchik should endorse. In a column in 1973 he praised German Americans who "killed their own cousins" in fighting the Kaiser's Germany.

Regarding the comparison of a former Nazi scientist to the Sakharovs, Mr. Muravchik and Buchanan

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are both half-wrong. Arthur Rudolph was more gravely implicated in Nazi crimes than Buchanan leads us to believe. But the Sakharovs were far more reprehensible than cold-war liberals have admitted. Sakharov, who remained a Marxist, had employed slave labor as a Soviet atomic physicist. His wife, Elena Bonner, had been a long-time Stalinist with close KGB connections. While this couple may have come to regret their youthful indiscretions, the same may be said about one-time Nazis. I suspect that Mr. Muravchik himself would be making this point, had he not set out to write a screed exclusively against Buchanan.

It should be conceded that Buchanan has written rashly about suspected Nazi war criminals, albeit usually out of a misguided sense of justice. His remarks about the gas used in extermination camps were both tasteless and intended to rile. He has also changed his opinions about the Middle East too quickly and too totally for us to consider him an entirely disinterested observer. He is, in fact, no more of one than his present accusers. Still, many of Buchanan's peeves are justified. He is correct to observe that those who rush to excuse African terrorists and American underclass killers are less indulgent toward octogenarians with Slavic or German names accused of Nazi atrocities. He has also noticed that A. M. Rosenthal, who calls for stamping out the PLO, supports South African black terrorists. Buchanan rightly complains that almost every discussion of the Holocaust begins or ends by trashing Christians. He wonders how Christianity could be the critical factor for a form of anti-Semitism that was also explicitly anti-Christian. As a historian I have often wondered about the same thing, in view of the absence of evidence linking Christian faith to Nazi membership and the stated repugnance of Nazi leaders for the Bible.

I mention Buchanan's responses to the attitudes of Jewish liberal journalists, for these may help explain why he is not as sympathetic to Jewish concerns as he once was. All the same, Buchanan continues to defend America's role in destroying Nazism and ending the Holocaust. One might have inferred something different from reading Mr. Muravchik's tirade.

PAUL GOTTFRIED
Bethesda, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As an industrial toxicologist with 35 years' experience, which included many studies of exposures to the exhausts of internal-combustion engines, I would be inclined to question the use of diesel-engine exhaust for mass executions, as Patrick J. Buchanan did in his defense of John Demjanjuk.

If the lethal effect of such exhaust is primarily to diminish the oxygen content of the air, at least 500 cubic feet of exhaust would be needed in a 1,000-cubic-foot chamber, to be fatal within an hour. In that case, the temperature inside the chamber would be horrendous.

On the other hand, if gasoline-engine exhaust were used, with a carbon-monoxide content of 5 percent, only 40 cubic feet would be required and the effects would be much quicker and less cruel. The average person, not a mechanic or engineer, would not know whether a given vehicle was powered by a diesel or gasoline engine. How definite and authoritative is the evidence that diesel rather than gasoline engines were used?

I also fail to see that this particular question has any major bearing on the matter of Patrick J. Buchanan's anti-Semitism.

HERVEY B. ELKINS
Belmont, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joshua Muravchik's article, "Patrick J. Buchanan and the Jews," is well argued, informative, and powerful. It does, however, contain an error about my writing on Buchanan. While I did write in the New York *Post* a column lamenting a "dark and medieval . . . rage" behind Buchanan's words, I did so some sixteen months ago, in response to a Buchanan column on the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz, not, as Mr. Muravchik suggests, in the wake of the Buchanan-A. M. Rosenthal controversy, a full year later.

I emphasize the point not only for the sake of accuracy, but because I would probably not have used that phrasing in that context, and because I felt no need to add more when my own views were amply represented by the *Post* editorial on Buchanan discussed in Mr. Muravchik's article.

SCOTT MCCONNELL
New York *Post*
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Patrick J. Buchanan, if he chooses to respond to Joshua Muravchik, might note a number of points in Mr. Muravchik's accusation that fall short of presenting undeniable proof, even while strongly indicating recognizable traces of lamentable bigotry. . . .

After Mr. Muravchik's revealing article, Buchanan is under serious obligation to answer the carefully catalogued charges and to indicate whether or not they were "taken out of context." Silence on Buchanan's part in this case is not golden. It is rather more like dross—heavy.

ALBERT L. WEEKS
New York University
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

While Joshua Muravchik has not convinced me that Patrick J. Buchanan is an anti-Semite, he has given conservatives much food for thought. What concerns me is Mr. Muravchik's equation of Buchanan's defense of his Catholic faith with anti-Semitism.

Publicly, at least, Jews have been seen exclusively by America's elite as a persecuted minority with progressive, if not radical, tendencies. Orthodox Jews have been treated like a curious tourist attraction for Historyland, invented by a Disney executive. On the other hand, Catholics (the orthodox ones, at least) have always been portrayed as a pernicious and reactionary, if not un-American, force. Too numerous to claim minority status, Catholics are labeled "paranoid" when we complain about discrimination.

By his ambivalence toward the desecration of Holy Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in the name of free speech, Mr. Muravchik does a disservice to both Catholics and Jews who take their belief in the Creator seriously.

LAWRENCE P. BIACCHI
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . It is worth noting the silence of the Catholic Church and some of its apologists about Patrick J. Buchanan's ravings. From so acute and interesting a mind as William F. Buckley, Jr.'s one might have expected better than vapid remarks about Buchanan's "insensitivity" and A. M. Rosenthal's "oversensitivity." . . . Will the Catholic Conference of Bishops take time out from making pronouncements on

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birth control and the Middle East to express episcopal displeasure with Buchanan's anti-Semitism? I doubt it.

But it is not only some Catholics who have granted themselves dispensation from the sin of silence about anti-Semitism in their midst. The majority of journalists have been just as lenient with Buchanan, which is to say with themselves. . . .

While many of his co-religionists and fellow journalists chose to avert their eyes from Buchanan's antics, other deep thinkers were eager to congratulate and support him. On October 15, 1990, the New York *Times* carried a large ad by "Jews and Christians Against a Mideast War." It praised Buchanan because, unlike his critics, "he puts America first." The America-firsters who signed this crude endorsement represented a remarkable variety of political persuasions: the "conservative" ideologue Paul Gottfried; the Hayek-von Mises epigone Murray Rothbard; the Cato Institute's truculent Israel-basher Leon Hadar; the feminist-socialist (and former left-wing Knesset member) Marsha Friedman; and so on. Truly, the state of Israel is a wonderful thing: it can now do for those in intellectual disarray what it has long done for the Arab nations—unite otherwise warring parties against a common enemy. . . .

EDWARD ALEXANDER
Seattle, Washington

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am puzzled as to why Joshua Muravchik, in his otherwise sensible article on Patrick J. Buchanan, fails to draw the comparison between him and Father Coughlin.

EDWARD NORDEN
Jerusalem, Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . There is obviously more than enough evidence of Patrick J. Buchanan's anti-Semitism. But it seems to me that there are different levels of anti-Semitism and that all of the sufferers from this ancient disease should not be included within this all-encompassing term. There are some Jews who are themselves infected, because of personal embarrassment or the need to prove they are American, first and foremost . . .

In any case, my concern is over why it is necessary to pussyfoot around with detailed proof of anti-Semitism. Why must chapter and verse be cited about such despicable people? Why do we even use such a gentle term as anti-Semite? . . .

WILBUR DUBERSTEIN
San Ramon, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

For years, I have been reading and listening to Patrick J. Buchanan's interminable rantings and I long ago concluded that he was an anti-Semite. . . . I watched the TV programs and read many of the articles referred to by Joshua Muravchik and was surprised (and nauseated) by the contortions undertaken by Buchanan's television colleagues . . . to exonerate him of the charges of anti-Semitism. . . .

SHELDON F. GOTTLIEB
Mobile, Alabama

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Hats off to Joshua Muravchik. While Patrick J. Buchanan may stay within the technical bounds of reason each time he confronts an issue regarding Israel or the Jews, his apparent obsession and consistent criticism are cause for concern. . . .

EVAN J. WINER
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . The last time the fascist, Jew-hating Right and the Communist, Jew-hating Left slept in the same bed was following the Hitler-Stalin marriage of convenience, just prior to World War II. Patrick J. Buchanan's resurrection of the fascist-Left alliance is well described in Joshua Muravchik's fine article and should be a warning to those of us who still consider ourselves civilized and to those of us who remember why the lights went out from 1939 to 1945.

GEORGE I. BERNSTEIN
Windsor, Ontario

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Congratulations to Joshua Muravchik for his excellent analysis of the controversy over Patrick J. Buchanan's anti-Semitism.

The most disturbing element in the row over Buchanan's attacks on American Jews and Israel has been the reluctance of most commentators to deal honestly with the question of anti-Semitism. As in the recent cases of Gore Vidal and Jesse Jackson, the restraints on openly expressing the kind of Jew-hatred that had once been confined to the margins of American society have been seriously eroded. The real news about the Buchanan incident is the overwhelming lack of interest of the American public and the complete absence of a sense of outrage over his Jew-baiting outside of the Jewish community. . . . Whatever else he has accomplished, Buchanan has proved conclusively that anti-Semitism is no longer beyond the pale of respectable discourse in American politics. . . .

JONATHAN S. TOBIN
Brooklyn, New York

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK writes:

I thank Evan J. Winer, George I. Bernstein, and Jonathan S. Tobin for their compliments. I thank Robert D. Novak for his, too, but I'm afraid that the difference he discerns between my analysis of Patrick J. Buchanan and that of other public figures whom I have criticized lies only in Mr. Novak's affinity for the former. I read through a great many but not all of Buchanan's columns and therefore kept no scoreboard, but I saw no "thrust . . . in favor of Israel"; at best it was a mixed bag. From Mr. Novak's unique vantage point as Israel's most vociferous and relentless critic in the mainstream American press, this may make Buchanan seem a "sympathizer with the Zionist cause," but measured against other, more relevant, standards it gives a different impression.

The first of these standards is the justice of the case. The underlying issue of the Arab-Israel conflict has always been the unwillingness of most Arab states to accept the existence of Israel. This is compounded by the vast disparity in the degree to which the two sides adhere to humane norms of civic behavior cherished by Americans. In consequence, most Americans are pro-Israel, not ambivalent like Buchanan.

The second standard is the nature of the PLO, the enemy on the cutting edge of the crusade against Israel and the one for which Buchanan has exhibited growing sympathy. The PLO has identified and collaborated with the African National Congress, the Salvadoran guerrillas, the Nicaraguan Sandinistas, and other such "liberation movements," which have been allied with the Soviet Union. Buchanan has been nothing short of ferocious toward all these groups *except* the PLO. And his ferocity has not been tempered by the shortcomings of their respective adver-

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saries—the governments of South Africa and El Salvador and the *contras*—all of them, to put it mildly, scarcely less flawed than Israel. That Buchanan should be ambivalent as between Israel and the PLO, rather than uniformly anti-Israel, does not prove, as Mr. Novak would have it, that he is innocent of anti-Semitism. Rather, it suggests that his usual ideological proclivities are counterbalanced by something else—and what can that be but hostility toward Israel?

Were Buchanan's record on Israel more sympathetic, that would still not erase his taunting of Jews, his suggestion that Jews were trying to drag America into war for Israel's sake, his outlandish charges of a Jewish conspiracy against him, his exhortations to Catholic-Jewish conflict, his championing of Nazi war criminals, and his dabbling in Holocaust revisionism. In the event, his mixed views about Israel and its pro-Communist adversaries only reinforce the impression made by these other stands.

Mark R. Masterson finds all of this an "incredibly tiresome . . . assembly of circumstantial tidbits," and Phil Shaw finds it no more evidence of anti-Semitism than opposition to quotas is evidence of racism. To impeach my case, however, they would have to offer an alternative, benign interpretation of the items I cited from Buchanan's record, which they have not done for a single one.

Nor will it suffice to cite occasional columns, as does my friend Allan Ryskind, in which Buchanan supported Israel or criticized someone for anti-Semitism. Buchanan's stock-in-trade is disputation and his targets are legion. In the course of a salvo against Karl Marx or the ACLU or Idi Amin he may well come down on the "pro-Jewish" side, but this does not diminish the import of the numerous occasions and contexts in which he has made the Jews his target.

Mr. Ryskind also makes much of the fact that Buchanan has Jewish friends, a point echoed by Andrew J. Murphy with the bizarre fillip about Barry Goldwater. They do not understand that anti-Semitism comes in a variety of forms. One variant, what we might call country-club prejudice, consists in an aversion to associating with Jews, but may entail no particular political content. On the other side, political anti-Semitism holds "the Jews" culpable of miscreancy, but may entail no dislike for this or that individual Jew. The latter type is infinitely more dangerous.

Messrs. Ryskind and Murphy both argue that Buchanan's opposition to America's involvement in the Persian Gulf is explained by his isolationism, not by an animus toward Israel. Perhaps, although I wonder if he would counsel neutrality in the event of, say, an attack on Taiwan by the People's Republic of China. My main point, however, concerned Buchanan's accusation that men like Richard Perle and Charles Krauthammer advocated resistance to Iraq only out of loyalty to Israel; this, I said, made him guilty of Jew-baiting because in fact their stance on Iraq was entirely consistent with their views on other issues.

Messrs. Ryskind and Murphy both also minimize Buchanan's role as an advocate for Nazi war criminals. They note that others have opposed deporting Karl Linnas and have questioned the evidence against John Demjanjuk. But Buchanan has not merely questioned the evidence against Demjanjuk, he has flatly declared its inauthenticity, in contradiction of U.S. government experts, and he has brazenly impugned the motives of American and Israeli officials who worked on the case. He has gone on to deny that "Ivan the Terrible" ever really existed, and that diesel-engine exhaust with which the Nazis killed many Jews is lethal. He has also taken up the case of Arthur Rudolph, and has flat-out lied by claiming that German prosecutors rejected the Justice Department's case against Rudolph. As his championing of these war criminals has grown more feverish, Buchanan has begun to regurgitate whole chunks of "information" supplied to him by kooks who claim that the Holocaust never happened.

Susan Jordan takes Buchanan's side on the particulars of the Demjanjuk and Linnas cases, but she is all wrong on the facts. The eyewitnesses who identified Demjanjuk did so on the basis of photographs taken soon after the war, not on his appearance today. How trustworthy are 40-year-old recollections? As any trial lawyer will tell you, that depends. You might not remember the face of someone who, say, snatched your purse, but you might have a pretty indelible memory of someone who tortured you and murdered your loved ones, day in and day out, for months or years.

As for the documentary evidence of Demjanjuk's guilt, it is of course true that the KGB perpetrates forgeries. But American, Israeli, and German experts have said that they are aware of no case of Soviet forgery in a Nazi war-crimes trial, which is not so surprising given the lack of political saliency in any of these cases. Moreover, in the Demjanjuk case, the critical documents were examined and scientifically tested by U.S. and Israeli government experts who pronounced them authentic. Nor, contrary to Susan Jordan, were the documents and witnesses the only evidence on which Demjanjuk was convicted: there was also his own testimony. His alibi was that he was being held as a POW by the Germans at Chelm until October 1944, after Treblinka had been closed down, but as the American court noted in its decision against him, Chelm had been retaken by the Red Army in January 1944, and so his alibi was a lie.

Susan Jordan errs even more grievously with regard to Linnas. Most of the testimony against Linnas was gathered in the Soviet Union, but not by Soviet courts: rather, by U.S. Justice Department officials in videotaped depositions. It is true that Soviet officials were present, but far from there being indications that the witnesses were coached or lying, there were suggestions to the contrary. To the consternation of the Soviet officials present, one key witness insisted on identifying himself as a citizen of Estonia rather than of the Soviet Union. There were also concentration-camp documents, authenticated by FBI experts, implicating Linnas, and a member of Linnas's Long Island car-pool testified that in a conversation the morning after the sensational charges against him broke in the American press, Linnas admitted his presence at the Tartu concentration camp.

Richard Viguerie seems incapable of writing an honest sentence. I did not criticize Buchanan for his views on the location of the Carmelite convent but for his appeal for intercommunal warfare over it; not for explaining the motivations of the PLO but for sympathizing with it; not for calling Hitler a skilled orator but for stringing together a litany of Hitler's alleged virtues including such debatable ones as bravery and scholarship; not over the seventeen-year-old

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soldiers buried at Bitburg but over the SS men buried there; and for blackening not Britain's motives in World War I, but America's.

Moreover, Mr. Viguerie's gratuitous reference to *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* echoes Buchanan's penchant for needling Jews. The documentary evidence against Demjanjuk has withstood expert scrutiny. The other evidence consists of the testimony of his victims; even if they erred—and there is no reason to believe they did—this bears no resemblance to the *Protocols*, a transparent fraud and the instrument of a vicious conspiracy which has cost many Jewish lives.

To top it off, Mr. Viguerie seems to hold the bizarre belief that he is the discoverer of Stalin's crimes against Ukrainians and, further, that this shows something about the "marketplace." If it does, it shows that there is a market for buffoonery.

Patrick J. McNally is right to object to assuming that Buchanan's lineage predicts his philo-Germanism. I did not, however, assume it; I inferred it from Buchanan's autobiography, in which he lays great stress on his loyalty—not only to his family, country, and Church, but even to his class and generation, and in which he dwells with great affection on his lineage.

Of course, as Paul Gottfried suggests, many Germans were victims of Hitler's crimes, but a goodly number were perpetrators, too. Nothing I wrote indicated a lack of sympathy for those victims or for the innocent German victims of Allied excesses; nor did I tax Buchanan for his German blood. I did, however, tax him for flagrantly impugning America's motives in World War I, for denigrating America's behavior in World War II, and for embracing the Nazi apologist Kurt Glaser. I found it ironic that Buchanan was so eager to exonerate Germany that he would calumniate America even while accusing American Jews of putting Israel's interests first.

It was disgusting of Buchanan to liken Arthur Rudolph to Sakharov, but Mr. Gottfried is even more disgusting in slandering the Sakharovs. Sakharov did not "remain" a Marxist, if he had ever been one, nor did he "employ" slave labor. Although slave labor was used, as Sakharov reports, in the nuclear-weapons program in which he worked as a physicist, he, unlike Rudolph, had no part in running the program. Moreover, Sakharov devoted much of his life—indeed, he gave his life—to defending slave laborers, political prisoners, and other victims of the Soviet regime. His wife Elena Bonner was once a Communist-party member, but never a "Stalinist," nor, according to any known evidence, was she associated with the KGB except as a victim. This charge, which, as best I can tell, originates with Mr. Gottfried, and is offered without a scintilla of evidence, is so vile that unless he can back it up he has written himself out of the circle of respectable discourse. I suppose I shouldn't expect much better from a man who says that "almost every discussion of the Holocaust begins or ends by trashing Christians."

As to Hervey B. Elkins's calculations (which seem to take no account of the number of human beings inside the killing chamber), numerous reports concur that diesel engines were used, and he is right that the effect was slow—which is why the Nazis switched where they could to Zyklon-B. The relevance of the issue is Buchanan's implication that Jews were not gassed at Treblinka, a thesis which in fact is argued by the "Holocaust revisionists" from whom Buchanan seems to have borrowed some of the "information" he has used in defense of Nazi war criminals.

I apologize to Scott McConnell for my error, although I plead extenuation in that the photocopy of his column I received from his newspaper had the year obscured, so I assumed it was from 1990 instead of 1989. Had I gotten the year right, it would only have strengthened my case by driving home the import of Buchanan's intervention in the Carmelite convent controversy. I am sorry that my error obscured the credit Mr. McConnell deserves for having pointed to a pathology in Buchanan's attitude toward Jews a year before the "amen corner" remark.

I find Albert L. Weeks's comment interesting, but perhaps it comes one round too late. The indictment against Buchanan was first brought by A.M. Rosenthal (having been adumbrated in part by Scott McConnell). If Buchanan sincerely believed himself innocent and misunderstood, he might have

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said so in his reply to Rosenthal, notwithstanding the fact that Rosenthal's tone scarcely invited reconciliation. Instead, he accused Rosenthal of being the instrument of an Anti-Defamation League conspiracy against him, and, curiously, he avoided directly denying the charge.

Finally, I am pained that Lawrence P. Biacchi thinks I am ambivalent about the desecration at St. Patrick's, an act which I found outrageous. I did not mean to minimize it by saying that it was up to the police to determine whether it warranted classification as a "hate crime" under the law, or by pointing out that it was sinister of Buchanan to imply that "hate crime" laws are intended to favor Jews over Catholics. Further, I agree with Mr. Biacchi that Catholics, particularly orthodox ones, have been maligned and ridiculed. I decry this, no less so when the perpetrators are Jewish, and no less than I decry Patrick J. Buchanan's venom toward the Jews.

Goodbye to All That

To the Editor of Commentary:

In "Socialism: Guilty as Charged" [December 1990], David Horowitz fails to recognize what most socialists and social democrats have publicly charged ever since Lenin, Trotsky, and their small band of Bolshevik followers overthrew the "socialist" Kerensky government in 1917: that Communism, favored for a time by David Horowitz and his New Left fellow-travelers, is not only guilty of crimes against humanity, but is a failure by all standards of decency.

Those few socialists who were mistaken and had Horowitz-type illusions were far outnumbered by those who always regarded democracy and pluralism as more synonymous with socialism and its goals. Most apologists for the Soviet dictatorship in the socialist movement shed their illusions long before the advent of the New Left.

A commitment to social democracy and opposition to the Communist dictatorship was apparent in such historic figures as Eugene V. Debs, Norman Thomas, Morris Hillquit, A. Philip Randolph, Sidney Hook, and Bayard Rustin—long before David Horowitz and his New Left band arrived on the scene. And there were many others, on the Left as well as on the Right, who understood the nature of Communism in the Soviet Union, China, and more recently in Cuba, Vietnam, and Nicaragua, and who also understood the nature of right-wing dictatorships in Chile, and of autocracies in the third world and elsewhere.

Repressions by Pinochet in Chile were not, as Mr. Horowitz puts it, "preludes to democratic restorations"; ask the people of Chile—they relieved Pinochet of power, with the same sort of help from him as the Communists are giving to their successors in the Communist world. . . . Were repressions by Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua also "preludes to democratic restorations"? No more or less than in Chile. Social democrats have no trouble distinguishing between right-wing and left-wing repression.

The economic failure of capitalism in both the United States and Western Europe resulting in the Depression of the 30's was partly ameliorated by government (socialist?) measures such as social security, the Federal Reserve, the Securities and Exchange Commission, restraints on monopolies, progressive taxation, encouragement of collective bargaining, and free trade unions. What Dr. New Deal did not cure economically in the 30's was healed by the socialist military enterprise called World War II. Following the war, socialist endeavors such as the Marshall Plan, the Truman Doctrine, the International Bank, and a host of other national and international measures saved Western Europe from the Stalinist hordes. In the postwar years, social democrats modified their economic views and still provided an alternative to unregulated capitalism.

Now that Communism has been found guilty and faces execution, what will replace it is not going to be Mr. Horowitz's laissez-faire capitalism or, for that matter, Bakunin's anarchism. Every advanced and successful economy is a mixture. While the market economy is here to stay, so are the social-democratic and socialist measures such as social security, the income tax, health care, a free education system, a common currency for Europe, regulation of monopolies, and a growing awareness of government responsibility rather than control.

Social democrats are anti-Communist cold warriors and to this day . . . they maintain a single standard against all repression, opposing both right-wing and left-wing dictatorships. Social democrats in many countries have long analyzed the Communist perversion as a lesson. This was learned long before the advent of the New Left and the metamorphosis of some of its leaders into the New Right.

Seymour Kopilow
Social Democrats USA
New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

I have read, and heard it said by respected authorities, that Hitler's appeal to the Germans was fueled by his nationalistic rejection of socialism, compounded by the fact that so many of the Weimar socialists were Jewish. It has also been said that this triggered the Nazis' anti-Semitism, and eventually led to the disaster of the Holocaust.

If I understand David Horowitz correctly, he is essentially repeating the same rationale when he states, "Hitler would not have come to power" if not for the Bolshevik Revolution. I wonder just how far Mr. Horowitz would go in absolving Hitler and his crazed, fanatic, followers because they saw the Red Menace and responded accordingly.

Melvin Rubenstein
Glendale, Missouri

To the Editor of Commentary:

"Socialism: Guilty as Charged" firmly establishes David Horowitz as one of this country's preeminent anti-Communist writers and thinkers. In a style reminiscent of Whittaker Chambers's *Witness*, Mr. Horowitz takes to task his former comrades on the Left who . . . continue clinging to their vain hopes of a "true" socialist future. Never mind that wherever the "faith" has been put into practice, it has failed abysmally. Never mind the fact that the beloved system has wreaked more havoc and snuffed out more innocent lives than perhaps all previous tyrannies combined.

What I found most insightful in Mr. Horowitz's article was the way he exposed the rottenness at the core of Marxist thought, a rottenness which predestined it to the totalitarian course it has invariably followed wherever and under whatever guise the "socialist experiment" has been implemented.

Leftist friends in my college days would always lament that "real" socialism had never been tried, that Stalin derailed and perverted the "humanistic" socialism of Marx

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and Lenin, that everything would have been different if the idealistic Trotsky had succeeded Lenin, etc., etc.

Yet the more I studied socialism, and the more I studied the personalities of its founders and heroes, the more evident it became that the doctrine itself was fatally flawed from its inception. . . .

Despite all indictments of the socialist reality on the part of Mr. Horowitz and others, the dreamers and schemers of the Left will forever come up with new excuses for and permutations of their socialist vision of a fair and equitable society. It is tragic that they are unable to see reality as it is, admit that their vision and heroes were flawed, and at last concede that our system of free-market, democratic capitalism, problems and all, is the best socioeconomic system yet devised for the welfare of the proletarian masses.

T. D. GORDON
North Wildwood, New Jersey

DAVID HOROWITZ writes:

Seymour Kopilow's letter exemplifies that almost pathological attachment to the "socialist" idea that can exist even among those who managed to stay an honorable course in the global struggle with the totalitarian Left. Just look at the intellectual somersaults he must perform to accomplish this feat: the Truman Doctrine a "socialist endeavor" indeed! Mr. Kopilow seems to think that any government program is socialist, which makes Bismarck and Czar Nicholas as much socialists as Norman Thomas.

Mr. Kopilow should be aware that some of my best friends are social democrats (as in "Social Democrats USA") and that I am familiar with their efforts on the good side of the cold-war fight, and wish I had been there as early myself. Still, Mr. Kopilow's statement that "those few socialists who were mistaken and had Horowitz-type illusions were far outnumbered by those who always regarded democracy and pluralism [as] . . . synonymous with socialism" is ludicrous. The socialists of Social Democrats USA, whom Mr. Kopilow represents, are a tiny sect, negligible even within the social democrats' own Socialist International—which gave dishonorable support to the Sandinista Marxists, facilitating their rape of Nicaragua, and which has been a steadfast ally of the Marxist-Leninists of the ANC in South Africa, among other totalitarian movements. Most social democrats, for whom Stalin was indeed unpalatable, found a way to learn to love the totalitarian revolutions that came afterward, saying that these revolutions would be different.

Mr. Kopilow's zeal to prove his own moral credentials (a tic characteristic of the Left) leads him to misunderstand what I wrote about Chile. Thus I did not attempt to justify Pinochet's tyranny as the prelude to a democratic restoration. I merely pointed out that leftists maintain a double standard in judging repressive regimes like Pinochet's and Castro's.

There is, finally, a serious issue in this whole discussion to which Mr. Kopilow's letter doesn't quite rise. The view expressed in my article is that because socialism doesn't work (and therefore socialist revolutions will inevitably lead to totalitarian solutions), all those who promote the socialist idea—even democratic socialists—share some guilt for the predictable results. Yet the fact remains that there are indeed genuine anti-Communist and anti-totalitarian socialists like Mr. Kopilow around. Doesn't this refute at least this part of my argument?

I think not. People can be sentimentally attached to an idea and regularly ignore or contradict it in practice. The real question is: is there any foundation for individual freedom in the socialist paradigm, and thus any real content to the designation "democratic socialist"? In my view there is not. The theoretical foundations for democratic liberties are wholly the creation of what used to be called the liberal tradition and is now (in this country at least) called the political Right. In this intellectual tradition that extends from Locke to Hayek, the foundations of liberty are inextricably tied to the defense of private property—a concept which even advanced democratic socialists like Mr. Kopilow (who have lately been forced to acknowledge the virtues of the market) have not yet begun to confront.

On the other hand, there is a theoretical basis not only for individual rights in the liberal capitalist paradigm but for those governmental responsibilities so dear to democratic socialists as well. Part of the destructive legacy of the intellectual Left is to have rendered so many people simultaneously contemptuous and ignorant of the complex theories of a thinker such as Hayek, who towers above Marx (and any social democrat Mr. Kopilow can name) in his understanding of the origins and development of modern societies, and whose writings provide a framework for confronting the problems that face them in a constructive way, without surrendering our liberties in the process.

The fact that only a minuscule contingent of socialists among the vast armies of the Left has resisted the totalitarian imperatives of the socialist idea proves just how powerful those imperatives are, and thus how poisonous the promotion of that idea and its intellectual traditions can be. The energy that Mr. Kopilow is prepared to expend in defense of the socialist idea and the scorn he so readily evinces for its intellectual opposition are measures of his own continuing blindness to socialist guilt in the tragedies of our times.

Melvin Rubenstein has misunderstood what I wrote. Under Stalin's orders, that part of the German Left loyal to the Bolshevik Revolution formed a working alliance with the Nazis to destroy the Weimar Republic. Without this alliance, Hitler's election to the chancellorship would not have taken place and the Nazis would not have come to power.

Let me thank T.D. Gordon for his kind remarks. I agree with his observations about leftists and their self-delusion, intolerance, and compulsion to come up with ever new excuses for socialism's failures and ever more strained permutations of their destructive ideal. Recognizing the bankruptcy of this ideal and admitting their mistake is evidently far more difficult for them than giving up their intellectual standards and self-respect.

Correction

In Gertrude Himmelfarb's "The Right to Misquote" [April], lines 13 and 14 on p. 32, column 1, should have read: ". . . the suit against Malcolm was decided in her favor. . . ."—ED.

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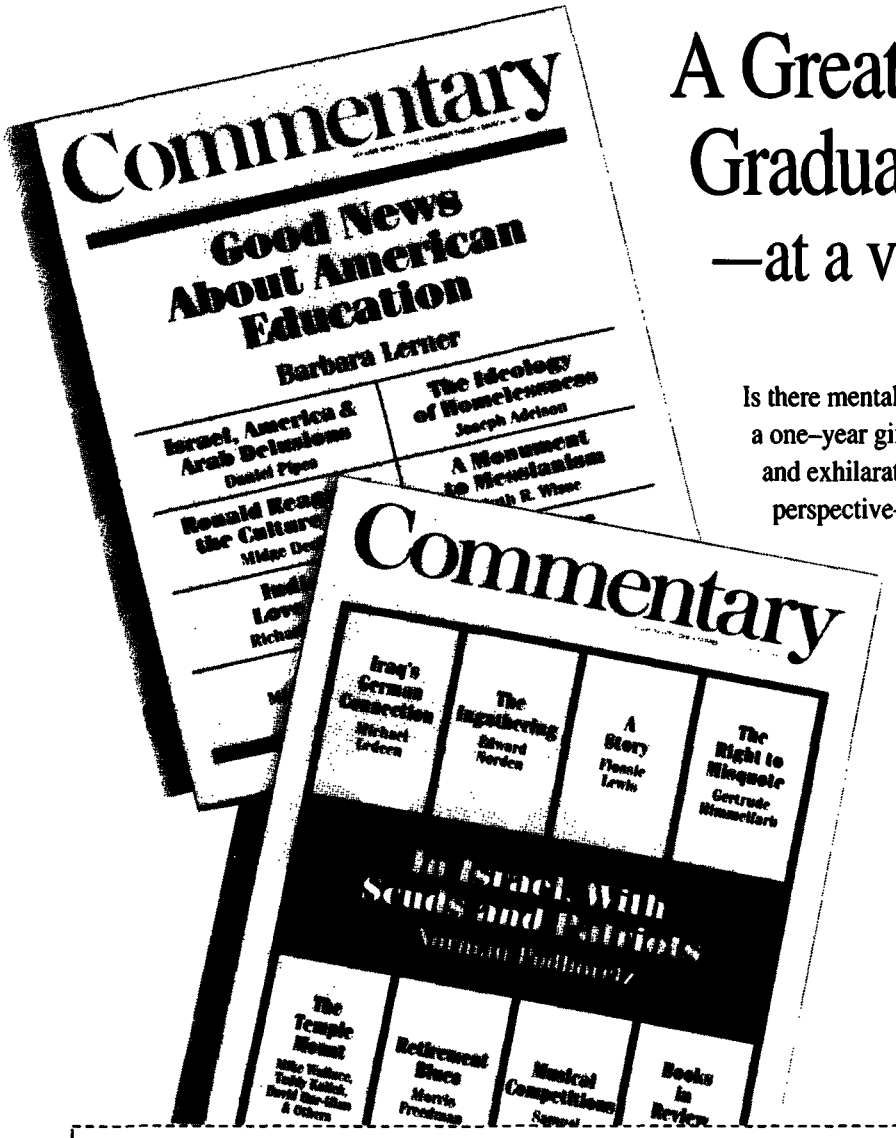

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The End of the Vietnam Paradigm?

Joshua Muravchik

SINCE the triumphant end of the war against Iraq, the predictions of those who had opposed it have become the object of much merry ridicule. For example, the Washington *Times* greeted the American victory with a daily feature inducting various false prophets into the "Desert Storm Hall of Shame." The *New Republic*'s Jacob Weisberg, in a similar exercise, wrote: "Never in the field of human conflict have so many been so wrong about so much, so publicly." And in the same jocular spirit, the Washington *Post* observed that "the hand-wringing of the doomsayers" now "all seem[s] farcically gloomy."

Though most of the people cited in these articles deserve the ridicule, the accompanying merriment tends to point in the wrong direction, as if the lesson were about the human propensity to folly or the hubris of experts. The true lesson here, however, concerns a certain world view which has dominated the Democratic party and much of our foreign-policy debate since Vietnam.

One part of that world view was an assessment of Communism. It taught that Communism was less evil or less dangerous than the postwar architects of America's "containment" policy had believed. To be sure, no one this side of Jesse Jackson or the Institute for Policy Studies believed that Communist regimes were actually beneficent, but a great many people discovered that Communists were nationalistic, intent on modernizing their countries, willing to take help where they could find it, and, although rigid or severe, not appreciably worse than whatever anti-Communist force happened to be arrayed against them. The people who had learned this lesson, said President Jimmy Carter, counting himself among them, had overcome the "inordinate fear of Communism."

All this new wisdom of the 1960's and 70's was washed down the drain by the revolutions of 1989. From Leipzig to Tiananmen Square to Managua, the people living under Communism delivered a single message, and, moreover, its gist was confirmed by Communist officials in Moscow and Budapest and even by a few in Hanoi. The message was that Communism was every bit the human catastrophe that the much reviled cold warriors had said it was—a living hell of oppression, repression, penury, and injustice. And we even learned from voices within the Kremlin itself that Soviet foreign policy had been just as predatory as the cold warriors had charged, and not merely a frightened, defensive response to our own threatening gestures, as some of the most assiduous teachers of "the lessons of Vietnam" had explained.

Yet even as this part of the Vietnam paradigm was being laid to rest, the argument was becoming moot, for the bitter truths about Communism were rediscovered only in the course of its collapse. There was, therefore, very little accounting. Now that Communism had lost its bite, it seemed churlish to dwell on the errors of those who had prematurely overcome their fear of Communism. Moreover, the doves could point out that the sudden implosion of the Soviet empire showed that it had been more fragile than the hawks ever imagined, although this did not quite counterbalance the fact that the implosion had come just when the United States was practicing policies toward the Soviet Union exactly the opposite of what the doves had recommended.

In any event, the collapse of this part of the Vietnam paradigm still left in question what would become of the other parts. These included the idea that the use of force had lost its utility. Even small countries, it seemed, could find the means to thwart large ones. This was held to be especially true for America because of the peculiar ineptness of our armed forces, which were hopelessly top-heavy and paralyzed by inter-service rivalry. And even in the unlikely event that America could employ force successfully, we would so alienate other people that the victory was bound to be pyrrhic. Further, economic power had become more important than military power, and the costs of arms and war made the whole undertaking almost inevitably self-defeating. This was compounded by the fact that military expenditures necessarily came at the expense of domestic "priorities," the neglect of which would weaken our society, rendering any foreign success hollow. America could avoid these pitfalls only if it were

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and the author of *Exporting Democracy: Fulfilling America's Destiny* (AEI Press).

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less interventionist and more tolerant of perspectives different from our own.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1991 created the first international crisis since the fading of the cold war and the first test of the lingering hold of the Vietnam paradigm. In the first weeks after August 2, it seemed that the hold had been broken. Most politicians and commentators, including liberal Democrats, supported President Bush's decision to send troops to Saudi Arabia in response to the Iraqi invasion. But throughout the fall, opposition mounted steadily, especially within the liberal community in general and the Democratic party in particular, so that by January, when Congress voted on authorizing the use of force, all the old arguments of the last twenty years could be heard in full cry once again—and this time they were even being echoed, for one reason or another, by a number of cold-war hawks.

THUS—to begin with the issue of how long the war might last—Jimmy Carter's Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, cautioned that "we might find ourselves alone in a hard and dirty war that could be won, but not quickly. . . ." Another former State Department official, George Ball, exhorted Americans to "frontally face the fact that a war will be anything but the quick and easy one its proponents suggest." And Mark Shields of the Washington *Post* reminded us that "faith in a short, decisive war remains the most persistent of human illusions."

In a like vein, Tom Wicker of the New York *Times* wrote: "It will not be a quick or bloodless operation, and it might not even be successful." Nine days after the fighting began, Wicker's colleague, Anthony Lewis, declared that "The war is going to be longer and uglier than most Americans at first believed." This seems to have been taken to heart by the editors of the trendy magazine *Spy* who, given the exigencies of lead-time, went to press with an April issue featuring a report that the war was dragging on and turning sour. "Were We Nuts?! A Tidy Five-Day Gulf War?" read their cover headline.

Spy's misplaced certitude reflected a widely shared contempt for the American military. So blunt, for example, did Tom Wicker find America's lance that he assumed it could be used only for bluffing—and not even for this, for who would believe the bluff? "The President . . . is trying to convince Saddam Hussein that he faces a choice between war and retreat," said Wicker. "The trouble with this strategy is that it relies on convincing the Iraqi leader of something inherently improbable."

For his part, Senator Bill Bradley (D., NJ) scoffed at the military utility of the additional troops sent to the Gulf in November, and asked: "Is inter-service rivalry once again driving military decisions?" Only one day into the air war, John Steinbruner of the Brookings Institution wrung his hands over the possibility that such inter-service rivalry would lead to an ill-considered pounding of Iraq. "We have to keep the army and marines on a short leash," he intoned, ". . . self-restraint looms as a larger problem than the Iraqi opposition."

For self-restraint to become our key problem after just one day of fighting might seem to suggest that our military had done at least something right in designing new weapons. Yet in the very same essay Steinbruner urged us not "to draw any final conclusions about high-tech warfare from our performance." Echoing this point two weeks into the war, former Senator Gary Hart debunked the emerging "myth . . . that 'high-quality' weapons have proved their superiority over 'low-quality' weapons." Only a few days earlier, Anthony Lewis had warned that bombing would prove no more effective than it had in Vietnam because "the Iraqis have had five months to go underground . . . perhaps as deep as the Vietnamese."

While others merely denigrated the abilities of the American military, Senator Daniel P. Moynihan (D., NY), whose conversion from hawk to dove had long preceded the Gulf crisis, took it upon himself to represent our military and political leaders as pathologically bellicose:

> Suddenly our institutions are acting as if to say, "Oh my God, we missed World War III. Maybe we can have it now here. Not there but here." . . . That borders on the edge of the disturbed. Dr. Strangelove, where are you now that we need you?

IN THE run-up to the fighting there was also much confident forecasting of (in Anthony Lewis's words) "ghastly American casualties." Others were more specific. The syndicated columnist team of Evans and Novak—a surprising recruit to the ranks of the doves—revealed that "the Pentagon's private estimate" was "a minimum of 20,000 American casualties." Apparently the Defense Department could not keep its numbers straight because another inside-dope columnist, Jack Anderson, reported that "top-secret Pentagon estimates" anticipated "as many as 30,000 dead in 20 days." *Newsweek* more temperately expected 5,000 dead and 15,000 wounded in the first ten days. But Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D., MA) declared that "the 45,000 body bags the Pentagon has sent to the region are all the evidence we need of the high price in lives and blood we will have to pay," and then he offered his own calculations based on "military experts": "At least 3,000 American casualties a week, with 700 dead, for as long as the war goes on."

Former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger (another cold-war hawk turned dove) pontificated

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that "in the event of an all-out assault on entrenched Iraqi positions, the casualties may be expected to run into several tens of thousands." Senator Carl Levin (D., MI) drew on his many years in the Armed Services Committee to predict "the deaths of thousands of American soldiers." Congressman Jim Moody (D., WI) informed his colleagues that a "minimum of 18,000 U.S. casualties, 3,000 dead" was a "certainty" if "fighting does include a ground war . . . and it could go far higher. One credible estimate capped it at 45,000 American casualties." Finally, Joshua Epstein of the Brookings Institution developed a "model" which enabled him to forecast with scientific precision: 3,344 to 16,059 casualties including 1,049 to 4,135 deaths. (An unbowed Epstein later told the Washington *Post* that the failure of his forecast was the fault not of his model but of the Iraqis.)

Edward N. Luttwak of the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), perhaps the most surprising opponent of the President's policy, and one of the most relentless, laid out a scenario based on assumptions he himself ridiculed for their "extreme" and "excessive" optimism. First he posited "a very elegant operation starting way to the west of Kuwait . . . to cut off the Iraqi forces in Kuwait." Then he added the assumption that "the softening-up air operations [would be] extremely effective and achieve the highest results ever achieved by any such [operation]" and that U.S. air supremacy would prevent any Iraqi counterstroke. "Let us further assume that all of our equipment works perfectly, all of our operational plans are very cunning, and all of our tactics are sound." Even so, Luttwak concluded:

> If we allow only the casualties incidental to a perfect operation, that is people stepping on mines, stepping on our own unexploded munitions . . . if we assume only casualties caused by very brief fire fights with stragglers and holdouts, material accidents, mechanical accidents, etc. . . . then one must still estimate several thousand killed in action or permanently maimed, with the inevitable quotient of MIA's.

On top of the terrible losses we would absorb on the battlefield, it was said, we would suffer around the globe at the hands of terrorists under Saddam Hussein's command. As Evans and Novak saw it:

> It is probable that after Bush orders the first shot fired, anything that looks American throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe could come into the cross hairs of a rifle sight or be blown up by a car bomb. . . . However swift and total a U.S. victory over Iraq may be, terror will be one of its most unpleasant and least avoidable adjuncts.

And as for the absence of terrorist acts during the months of crisis that had already elapsed, Evans and Novak explained that this only "displays Saddam Hussein's iron control."

COMPOUNDING the grievous price that the war would exact, it would also backfire. First, it would cause our allies to desert us. "President Bush has imperiled the international coalition," said Senator Bradley upon the November announcement of further American troop deployments to the Gulf. War "risks destroying the fragile international alliance that is united against Iraqi aggression," said Senator Levin. "The present coalition supporting sanctions may be difficult to hold together over time, but a war could divide the coalition even more quickly," said Senator Kennedy. "The United States is likely to become estranged from many of its European allies," said another erstwhile hawk, the former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski.

By fighting Iraq, furthermore, we would prevoke the enmity of the entire Arab or Muslim world. Senator Bradley foresaw that

> a massive United States military victory in Iraq, killing tens of thousands of Arabs, would make the United States the main enemy of millions of Arabs for generations. It wouldn't be just Iraqis, Iranians, and Islamic zealots referring to our nation as the Great Satan or seeing the United States as a mortal threat. It would be many well-meaning people throughout the Arab and Islamic world.

"What value will the victory hold if we have permanently embittered a generation in the Arab world?" demanded Senator Paul Wellstone (D., MN). So too former President Jimmy Carter:

> In the aftermath of the war, no matter what the outcome might be, an allied invasion will be viewed simplistically as a devastating attack by United States forces against the people of Iraq and Kuwait. Religious sensitivities among Muslim believers in all countries will be further aroused because of the dramatic presence and actions of Western powers in their holy lands.

In the same vein, George Ball observed that war would "leave the United States in the position of a pariah in the whole Middle East, with not a single friend except Israel." And Anthony Lewis worried that "military victory will turn to political ashes" since "millions of Arabs, whether they like Saddam Hussein or not, will react to an Iraqi defeat with feelings of despair, anger, resentment of America."

Just as the Arabs would come to hate us, they would come to love Saddam Hussein. Mark Shields reported that visits to the Gulf during the fall had convinced Democratic Senators Bob Graham (FL) and Richard Shelby (AL) that the Iraqi ruler had "captured the imagination of the Arab masses." Judith Kipper of the Brookings Institu-

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tion concurred: "If he can stay alive during a war, he will emerge a hero of the Arab street. There's no question about it."

Even after the fighting had begun, and America's battlefield success was evident, these alarums continued. Brzezinski expected "a global wave of sympathy for Iraq." A month into the fighting, Wicker was sure that

> On the important propaganda front . . . Saddam Hussein is proving a tough opponent who's scoring points just where it's most important for him to make them . . . the Middle East, the third world, and perhaps in Europe and Moscow.

And as the fighting neared its climax, Stanley Hoffmann of Harvard explained that even in victory

> the coalition's ability to establish a new order in the Mideast may be impaired by the deep sympathy many Arabs will continue to feel for Saddam Hussein . . . as the champion of resistance to . . . America.

NOT only would the war alienate our allies and embitter the Arabs, it would have an analogous effect here at home. "If George Bush takes the nation into war in the Middle East," announced Wicker, "he's likely to find out that its people will be anything but united in his support." Brzezinski warned of "bitter domestic divisions" that "could easily degenerate into ugly recriminations." And the columnist Carl Rowan declaimed: "I tell you, if [Bush] moves . . . right after January 15, this will be one of the least-supported wars that we've had, including Vietnam."

Domestic strife, it was further predicted, would be exacerbated by disruptions of oil supplies. According to Senator Kennedy, "A war could also do enormous damage to the world economy, sending oil prices twice as high as they are today, with potentially harsh and disruptive consequences for all nations." Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D., ME) also foresaw "a greatly disrupted oil supply and oil price increases." And Christopher Flavin of the Worldwatch Institute spelled out the economic consequences in more detail: "Worldwide gasoline rationing, . . . the financial collapse of developing countries, outright failure of the economic reforms in Eastern Europe, and a severe shock to the world banking system."

Beyond fostering domestic strife, war would bring instability to the Middle East and perhaps the whole world. "The devastating consequences," said Jimmy Carter, "will be . . . for decades to come, in economic and political destabilization of the Middle East region." Senator Mitchell also anticipated "increased instability in the Persian Gulf region [and] long-lasting Arab enmity against the United States." Senator Wellstone asked "what good will victory be if we destabilize regimes in Egypt, Jordan, and the North African states?" And Brzezinski worried that the most likely result of Bush's policy would be "geopolitical chaos in the region."

Indeed, said the critics, war would destroy the very "New World Order" that Bush had invoked as the goal of his policy. Wicker: "A U.S. attack on Iraq . . . would destroy the new possibilities for collective security in a post-cold-war world." Senator Tom Harkin (D., IA): "Rather than responding with brute force and military power, we need a new world order wherein we respond to the Saddam Husseins of the world with . . . economic and diplomatic isolation." Stanley Hoffmann: "Collective security will be the casualty, not the winner" of a war and "the cost of allowing [Saddam Hussein] to save face if he leaves Kuwait [in exchange for concessions] may be far less than blowing him away, and of blowing away in the process the future of collective security."

Princeton's Richard H. Ullman offered an alternative approach to collective security:

> The ground rules of the New World Order should be plain. The unilateral use of military power to change state borders, to seize economic resources, and to right perceived wrongs is unacceptable. Governments that violate these rules will be punished. Punishment will take the form of economic pressure, applied internationally, that would be certain, severe, sustained, and enforced—pressure that would not work tomorrow or the next day, but would work eventually.

INDEED, the idea that economic sanctions would succeed in driving Iraq out of Kuwait became the standard theme of opponents of force. On this point, Democratic Congressman Richard Gephardt of Missouri was especially emphatic: "Iraq is under siege, cut off from all the world and all supplies. . . . The question is not whether he will give up, but when." Senator Kennedy went further, insisting that sanctions were not only

> the best means at the least cost to persuade Saddam to withdraw from Kuwait. Sanctions are also the most realistic policy for achieving the long-run goal of dismantling Saddam's present and future arsenal of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons and ensuring that none of these weapons is ever used again.

Others made more cautious claims. James Schlesinger contended that in time sanctions would succeed in freeing Kuwait, but not if that objective were enlarged with demands for dismantling Iraqi weapons or requiring reparations. Cyrus Vance contended that "the sanctions are biting, and . . . if given adequate time . . . they can bring about a peaceful solution of this problem." But Vance also explained that the solution he had in mind envisioned "an international conference

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. . . convened by the UN Secretary General [to] . . . consider *both* security in the Gulf and Arab-Israeli peacemaking" (emphasis in original).

Brzezinski, so often at odds with Vance when they were both in the Carter administration, agreed with him about sanctions and negotiations. Although he favored sanctions, Brzezinski opposed an "airtight, seatight blockade . . . to strangle Iraq into complete capitulation" because "Saddam Hussein would then lash out." Instead he advocated "a protracted squeeze with some porousness in it, so that there is time for negotiations."

Many others joined Vance and Brzezinski in seeking a negotiated, compromise solution. Jimmy Carter declared that Iraq must abide by UN resolutions, but that "other disputes, compatible with this bottom-line demand, can still be negotiated, preferably among Arab leaders with Western backing" in which "reasonable concessions [will be] required by all contending parties." Governor Mario Cuomo of New York was quoted as saying: "You could negotiate something that . . . leaves them a little bit on the water, leaves them a little bit of the oil, and then puts in a United Nations task force." Cuomo later complained that his words had been taken out of context, but there was no such doubt about the stand of former Senator George McGovern who proposed that

> If Saddam agrees not only to withdraw his forces but to forgo the further development of chemical and nuclear weapons, Iraq might be granted an opening to the Persian Gulf and sole control over Rumailah, an important oilfield.

And Stanley Hoffmann evoked the Cuban missile-crisis settlement as a model for a deal in the Gulf:

> Just as we did not formally "reward" the Soviets for removing their missiles from Cuba by linking their retreat to the removal of American missiles in Turkey, yet we removed them afterward, we could suggest to Iraq that we would be willing to initiate (1) an international conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict; (2) an arms-control conference aimed at ending the shipment to the region of certain categories of weapons and at inspecting the nuclear and chemical facilities of all the Middle Eastern states; and (3) arbitration between Iraq and Kuwait, but only after Iraq's evacuation of its neighbor.

Like Vance and Hoffmann, virtually everyone who advocated negotiations endorsed the idea of linking the occupation of Kuwait to the Arab-Israeli conflict. "There is no way to separate the crisis in the Gulf from the Israeli-Palestinian question," proclaimed Jimmy Carter, by way of proposing "a carefully crafted peace conference under the bilateral sponsorship of the United States and the Soviet Union." Carl Rowan chimed in with, "We must have a comprehensive international conference to deal with not only Kuwait, but the future of Palestinians, the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, and much more." George Ball proposed "something similar to the Congress of Vienna for the Middle East" to cover "the Palestinian issue" as well as "numerous boundary issues" and "disarmament" and "security." This, he thought, "would enable Saddam Hussein to claim a little credit for it," thus affording him a "facesaver."

Other opponents of war took the position that America had no "vital interest" at stake. Still another former hawk, Senator Sam Nunn (D., GA) said:

> We have an obligation as leaders to distinguish between important interests which are worthy of economic, political [responses] and interests that are vital, that are worth . . . calling . . . on our young men and women in uniform to sacrifice, if necessary, their lives.

Senator Joseph Biden (D., DE) asked:

> Just what interests are at stake here? We have heard from the administration a number of suggestions: oil and our way of life. The principle of collective security. The stability of the Middle East.
>
> But on examination, no argument can be sustained that any vital American interest is now in jeopardy.

Senator J. Robert Kerrey (D., NE) declared that "rather than threatening war . . . we should tell Iraq and the world we believe the wholesale loss of American and Arab lives is too great a price to liberate Kuwait." With exemplary candor, he drew the conclusion that "driving Iraq from Kuwait, as important and worthy as it is, should no longer be the first principle of our . . . policy" because it "tends to force us into a corner." Likewise, Charles Peters of the *Washington Monthly* argued that

> the invasion [of Kuwait] is worth our best efforts to enforce the embargo—which could thoroughly sabotage Iraq's military, chemical, and nuclear potential—but that's all it's worth.

Some believed, as Anna Quindlen of the New York *Times* put it, that "we are going to war for oil," or that, as Senator Kennedy argued,

> the principal reason driving the President's policy of war can be spelled out in three other letters: O-I-L. . . . Not a single American life should be sacrificed in a war for the price of oil.

Still another line of argument concerned the relative balance of burdens between America and its allies. According to Senator Timothy Wirth

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(D., CO), "We cannot and should not be policeman to the world." Senator Mitchell added:

> Certainly, the United States has a high responsibility to lead the international community in opposing aggression, but this should not require the United States to assume a greater burden and a greater responsibility than other nations with an equal or even greater stake in the resolution of the crisis.

And Brzezinski maintained that "we should only go to war if the international community as a whole is prepared to go to war."

Still others cited America's domestic problems as a reason for opposing the war. Charles Peters, putting a class twist on a line that was more often expressed in terms of race, opined that "working-class Americans would be suckers to do the dying for America's ruling elite." Ron Walters of Howard University, citing the President's opposition to racial quotas, accused the Bush administration of

> playing race politics in a manner that would continue to deny national resources to blacks, while black lives are disproportionately at stake as a result of his foreign policy. If no one will respect the nature of their sacrifice, then why should blacks especially be motivated to demand that their sons and daughters give it . . . ?*

And Edward Luttwak, sounding more like a liberal than like the conservative he usually is, decried the fact that engagement in the Gulf was "divert[ing] us from addressing the domestic problems that threaten the future of America far more fundamentally than Saddam Hussein ever could."

LOOKING carefully at all these arguments, we find that they reflect the major themes of the Vietnam paradigm. Thus, the argument for sanctions was in truth only a reprise of the Vietnam paradigm's aversion to the use of force, as well as its low opinion of the American military; the argument for compromise was little more than a reflection of its impulse toward appeasement; and the argument that America's "vital interests" were not at stake in Kuwait was but a recrudescence of its thrust toward isolationism. Although this is not the place for a lengthy rebuttal of these positions, suffice it to note that the champions of sanctions never sketched a plausible scenario in which Saddam Hussein would swallow the humiliation of bowing to Western terms before the coalition cracked; that any compromise woud have allowed Saddam Hussein to emerge with his status and therefore his power enhanced; and that if the outright annihilation of a member nation of the UN and the seizure of control over a substantial part of the world's energy reserves did not qualify as an attack on our vital interests, then little else would.

Most of the people who harped on these themes, and made the predictions that flowed from them, were, as we have seen, the same liberal Democrats who had been saying much the same things about every global crisis since Vietnam. To be sure, there were a few exceptions: President Bush received essential support in the House from liberal Democrats like Stephen Solarz (NY), Dante Fascell (FL), and Les Aspin (WI). These men, however, had already established reputations for independence of mind on such issues as Cambodia (Solarz), Nicaragua (Fascell), or defense policy (Aspin). On the other hand, of those who had been consistent doves since Vietnam, hardly any backed the President—not even among strong supporters of Israel, notwithstanding the obvious Israeli interest in seeing Saddam Hussein's military machine smashed. (Indeed, a majority of the Jewish members of each house, most of whom are liberal Democrats, voted against the President.)

For the most part, even Democrats who were not dovish by predisposition tended to be dragged along by the enormous weight of dovish sentiment within their party (reinforced by the doves' unmatched penchant for cutthroat politics within the party caucus, recently displayed anew in the efforts to block the elevation of centrist Dave McCurdy to the chairmanship of the House Intelligence Committee). Just as Congressmen Jim Wright and Tom Foley and Senator Daniel P. Moynihan, all former officers of the hawkish Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM), had each fallen in line with the party majority, so now Senator Nunn, the premier "defense Democrat," took on the role of leading opponent of the use of force in the Gulf.

Outside Congress, Democratic activist Ann Lewis, a leader of Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign, figured prominently in the Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf, which supported the use of force against Iraq, but none of the Committee's other members, except perhaps former Representative Tony Coelho, was a dyed-in-the-wool dove. Richard Cohen of the Washington *Post* was another rare dove who supported the President's policy. With the cold war over, he seemed to see the world with fresh eyes, like Rip Van Winkle awakening from his long sleep. Thus, taking George McGovern to task for opposing the war, Cohen wrote in ingenuous consternation: "Incredibly, the isolationist chicken has roosted in the Democratic Left."

And so it had, about twenty years earlier, together with its twin, pacifism, when the selfsame George McGovern carried the Democratic standard under the slogan, "Come Home, America," and the promise to cut defense expenditures by a third. True, in the present case there were not many adherents of absolute pacifism or isolation-

* See Arch Puddington's article beginning on p. 28 for a more extensive discussion of this line of argument.—ED.

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ism. But there were many who believed, as Stanley Hoffmann sympathetically paraphrased it in 1973, that the "irrelevance of military power to most of the goals pursued by states" is "increasingly obvious," and also many who believed, as Richard Ullman wrote in 1975, that "American physical security would not in any immediate sense be affected by drastic changes in the internal political structure of any other state or states."

The Gulf crisis showed that this perspective was still shaping our national debate. Indeed, far from having laid the Vietnam paradigm to rest, the end of the cold war seemed, as we have already noted, to have brought it new adherents—on the Right side of the political spectrum. With the Communist threat receding, some of them (like the columnist Patrick J. Buchanan) aimed to resurrect the traditional isolationism of the American Right. Others (like Luttwak) embraced the neo-isolationist view that economic issues have surpassed political-military factors in importance. Still others (like Evans and Novak) seemed motivated by a solicitude for Arab sensibilities quite similar to the solicitude many on the Left used to show for the sensibilities of third-world revolutionaries.

Will, then, the Vietnam paradigm survive the Gulf War? The early signs are mixed. William Raspberry of the Washington *Post* set a standard of journalistic probity with a column titled "Eating My Hat" in which he criticized his own misreading of the Gulf situation. "It seems obvious," joked Raspberry, "that President Bush developed his stunningly successful strategy by reading every recommendation of mine—and then doing just the opposite." But Tom Wicker, whose errors of prognostication were unsurpassed, wrote a column defending himself, while such prominent Democrats as Nunn, Hamilton, and Cuomo have gone on insisting that sanctions alone might still have worked.

Others argue that the Gulf War has changed nothing. To Anthony Lewis, a lesson of this war "is that neither the United States nor the world can afford to repeat it." Eric Alterman of the leftist World Policy Institute declares that "the Vietnam syndrome remains in place" because "Saddam Hussein is a one-of-a-kind bad guy." And Buchanan cites, in full credulity, a report that "Military officials in Moscow . . . have made derisive comments about the allied performance." They may have made such comments, but it is hard not to believe they were whistling past the graveyard, just as Buchanan himself, along with Alterman and Lewis, may be doing.

Lewis's anxiety showed through in another recent column in which he wrote:

> One result, if it comes, would be a special disaster. That is the encouragement, in America, of the delusory belief that military power can solve the world's problems.

Similarly, Ellen Goodman of the Boston *Globe*, confessed to

> an unexpected, unrelenting worry about the meaning of an "easy" win. . . . Vietnam taught us to be reluctant about getting into another faraway war. What message will come from the Gulf? Don't be afraid?

Meg Greenfield of the Washington *Post* decried "the merciless taunting assaults" to which Gulf doves in the war's aftermath were being subjected for their errors. In response it is tempting to suggest that the errors of those who opposed the Gulf War be treated with the same gracious indulgence as were the errors of those who supported the Vietnam war. Be that as it may, it is important to understand why so many bright people could have made so many egregiously wrong predictions, and surely the explanation is that they were in thrall to some very wrong ideas that flowed from our Vietnam debacle. The question now is whether our triumph in the Gulf, and their embarrassment, will at last lay that destructive paradigm to rest.

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TV News & the Neutrality Principle

John Corry

ALMOST unremarked, we have passed a turning point in journalism, particularly as journalism is practiced on television. Exactly when this happened is unclear—although by the 1980's there were hints—but American broadcasts from Baghdad while American warplanes flew overhead finally made it certain. The old journalistic ideal of objectivity—the sense that reporting involves the gathering and presentation of relevant facts after appropriate critical analysis—has given way to a more porous standard. According to this new standard, reporters may—indeed should—stand midway between two opposing sides, even when one of the two sides is their own.

This is no academic matter. Neutrality is now a principle of American journalism, explicitly stated and solemnly embraced. After Dan Rather of CBS reported from Saudi Arabia last August that "our tanks are arriving," the Washington *Post* gave him a call: wasn't it jingoistic, perhaps xenophobic, to say "our tanks"? Rather apologized and promised he would never say such a thing again. He should have known better in the first place. After all, Mike Wallace, Rather's CBS colleague, made the new standard clear well before the Gulf crisis started. At a conference on the military and the press at Columbia University on October 31, 1987, Wallace announced that it would be appropriate for him as a journalist to accompany enemy troops into battle, even if they ambushed American soliders.* And during the war itself, Bernard Shaw of CNN, explaining why he had refused to be debriefed by American officials after he left Baghdad, declared that reporters must be "neutral."

As it happens, Shaw once said that the late Edward R. Murrow of CBS was his great hero. Indeed, a whole generation of television newsmen regard Murrow as their hero, invoking his name every time they give one another an award. They ought to go back now and listen to his broadcasts. In the Battle of Britain and other engagements, Murrow was outspoken about which side he was on, and he was never a neutral reporter. It would have been unthinkable for him in 1944, say, to make his way to Berlin, check into the Adlon Hotel, and pass on pronouncements by Hitler.

Still, this is the New World Order, and rules everywhere are changing. The great place to be for television journalists this winter was the Al Rashid Hotel in Baghdad, in the basement of which, according to the Pentagon, was a command-and-control center, although the journalists holed up there were (neutrally) unable to find it.

Colleagues did complain when Peter Arnett of CNN stayed on in Baghdad after other journalists had been expelled; the complaints, however, were not so much about whether CNN (which has outlets in 104 countries) was acting as a broadcasting service for Saddam Hussein as about whether it was taking advantage of its competitors. When CBS, ABC, and NBC got their own correspondents into Baghdad, the complaints ended.

"You must avoid the appearance of cheerleading," Ed Turner, the vice president of CNN, said during the war. "We are, after all, at CNN, a global network." Turner, no relation to his boss Ted Turner, although obviously they think alike, went on to stress that CNN wanted to be fair to *all* nations. But the truth was that CNN had a mission. Speaking from Baghdad, Arnett told us what it was:

> I know it's Ted Turner's vision to get CNN around the world, and we can prevent events like this from occurring in the future. I know that is my wish after covering wars all over and conflicts all over the world. I mean, I am sick of wars, and I am here because maybe my contribution will somehow lessen the hostilities, if not this time, maybe next time.

JOHN CORRY, formerly a television critic for the New York *Times*, now teaches at the College of Communications at Boston University, and is at work on a book about the media.

* A Marine colonel at the conference, George M. Connell, had a different perspective. "I feel utter contempt," he said when responding to Wallace, who had been supported in his declaration of neutrality, even if hesitantly, by Peter Jennings of ABC. "Two days later they're both [Wallace and Jennings] walking off my hilltop; they're 200 yards away, and they get ambushed, and they're lying there wounded—and they're going to expect that I send Marines up there to get them. . . . But I'll do it, and that's what makes me so contemptuous of them. And Marines will die going to get a couple of journalists." Colonel Connell was not being fanciful. When the correspondent Bob Simon vanished with his crew near the Kuwaiti border, CBS called the Pentagon for help.

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Old-style journalists grew sick of wars, too, although few thought their presence would prevent them. New-style neutral journalists, however, have their conceits, and the constraints that bind fellow citizens are not necessarily binding on them. At the Columbia conference, Mike Wallace was asked if a "higher duty as an American citizen" did not take precedence over the duty of a journalist. "No," Wallace replied, "you don't have that higher duty—no, no." But if a neutral journalist does not owe a higher duty to citizenship, where does his higher duty lie? Old-style journalists seldom thought about that. A story was a story, and a reporter went out and reported it. Our age is self-consciously moral, though, and higher duties now weigh on us all. Arnett was clear about his higher duty, even without being asked. "I don't work for the national interest," he asserted in another broadcast from Baghdad. "I work for the public interest."

And it may be here that neutral journalism flies apart and breaks up into shards. What is this public interest, and who determines it, anyway? The national interest is determined by consensus and people are elected to serve it. The recent consensus was that the U.S. national interest lay in driving Iraq out of Kuwait and decimating its war machine. But the public interest is amorphous, and usually it turns out to be closer to the interest of its advocates than to that of the public.

Consider the performances in Baghdad. The correspondents there could not gather relevant facts, and if they had tried, they would have been expelled, or worse, from Iraq. What the correspondents did was listen to government-controlled Baghdad Radio (with a translator, presumably; none of the correspondents seemed to speak Arabic), tour Baghdad neighborhoods (with government guides and monitors), and, in the fashion of journalists everywhere, pick up what they could from other correspondents they met.

There is not much chance to do real reporting in a situation like that, and most of the time, one suspects, the correspondents knew it. Anchormen pressed them on questions they could not possibly answer. Tell me, Peter (or Bill, or Tom, or Betsy), an anchor would ask, how do Iraqis feel about this statement from President Bush? And Peter (or Bill, or Tom, or Betsy), from a cubicle in a hotel, an eight-hour time difference away, in a country whose language he did not understand, would reply as best he could.

The most accurate reply would have been, "I don't know," but you cannot say that very often and keep your job in television. So the reporting from Baghdad inevitably turned into an exercise by the correspondent in appearing to know something when he probably did not know much, while bearing in mind that he could not offend the host government.

Obvious questions arise: what if a correspondent in Baghdad had discovered something the host government did not want revealed? What if a correspondent had uncovered news about a party purge, or an outbreak of civil disorder, or the whereabouts of Saddam Hussein? Or—and this is not far-fetched—what if a correspondent, being bused from Baghdad to Basra, had come across an artillery battery with shells loaded with nerve gas and pointed toward U.S. Marines? The profession was uncomfortable with questions like that. Nonetheless, they could not be entirely ignored, and obliquely the correspondents in Baghdad addressed them. Were they, for example, holding back information?

"There are lots of things that you can't report," Betsy Aaron of CBS acknowledged. "If you do, you are asked to leave the country, and I don't think we want to do that. I think you do a very valuable service reporting, no matter what you are allowed to report."

No matter what you are allowed to report? Imagine Ed Murrow saying that. Neutral journalism assumes that what the reporter reports is not nearly as important as the fact that the reporter is there to report it. Journalism becomes a symbolic act, distinguished by form and not content. Operate under that standard, and censorship will not be a problem. Here is Bill Blakemore, speaking over ABC from Baghdad:

> The script process is very normal for wartime, I would say. We write our scripts. We find one of the censors who's down in the hotel lobby, and we show it to the censor who reads it, and sometimes there's a slight change of a word here or there. Very often you may say something you didn't realize would touch a sensitivity, but there's not been any kind of heavy censorship in my experience here so far. It's a fairly easy understanding we have.

Clearly, the "fairly easy understanding" between correspondents and one of the world's most repressive governments meant that the correspondents simply censored themselves. If they were uncertain how to do this, they could always get help. Here is Blakemore again, in an exchange with his anchorman, Peter Jennings:

"Bill, are you operating on a completely uncensored basis?" Jennings whimsically asked.

No, Blakemore responded, "we got organized just now and managed to get somebody over here to listen and make sure we don't have any military or strategic information."

Neutral status means that a journalist does not report objectively; he reports selectively. Arnett, visiting what had been Baghdad's two main power plants, now destroyed by bombs and missiles, spoke of "relentless attacks on civilian installations." He did not mention that those installations had been covered in cam-

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ouflage paint. When he reported on the famous target that the Pentagon said was a biological-weapons factory and the Iraqis claimed was a "baby-milk plant"—"innocent enough from what we could see," observed Arnett—he did not notice the camouflage there, either. (Visiting German peace activists, of all people, did notice it and talked about it when they got back to Europe.) After being taken to another bombed-out site, Arnett reported that "while we were there, a distraught woman shouted insults at the press and vented anger at the West." Then we saw and heard the woman, who was standing next to a crater. "All of you are responsible, all of you, bombing the people for the sake of oil," she screamed in perfect English. She also turned up on French television speaking perfect French. Several days later, a CNN anchor in Atlanta identified her as an employee of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry.

Arnett, an old hand at covering wars and seeing through propaganda, presumably knew that when the "distraught woman" was shouting. Surely he at least noticed that her jogging suit had "United Nations" printed down one leg. A neutral journalist must narrow his vision and report with one eye closed.

The Baghdad correspondents, as individuals or as a group, most likely will sweep this year's television-journalism prizes. A claque formed almost immediately for Arnett, heaping encomiums on his head (especially after his patriotism was questioned by Senator Alan Simpson). He was a "dukes-up guy," "brave" and "independent," and an ornament to his profession. In the true spirit of neutral journalism, government-controlled Iraqi newsmen joined the claque, too. "The Iraqi press wrote favorably about me," Arnett told Larry King, the CNN talk-show host, who interviewed him when the war was over. Arnett also said he had become a "third-world hero."

Certainly Arnett and the other Baghdad correspondents displayed physical bravery in placing themselves in a war zone; and they did report, loosely speaking, to the best of their abilities. On the other hand, the correspondents as individuals were incidental. If there had not been Peter, Bill, Tom, or Betsy, there would have been John, Morton, Arthur, or Susan, and the "reporting" would have been much the same. For them, the great thing was that anyone was in Baghdad at all, and it did not matter that a great many other Americans were disturbed. When a Washington *Post*-ABC News poll asked if we should bomb a communications center in the Baghdad hotel where the reporters were staying, 62 percent of the respondents said we should issue a warning and then bomb even if the reporters were still there; 5 percent said we should forget the warning and just go ahead with the bombing.

In fact, the press as a whole did not come off well in the war. Television tarred more reliable print, and polls showed a huge dislike of the media. The essential reason was captured by the headline over a story in *Time* about disenchantment with the press: "Just Whose Side Are They On?" The "they," of course, were journalists, and simply by raising the question *Time* went a long way toward providing the answer, even though the story itself predictably took a different position: "The attacks from both sides probably mean that the press is situated just about where it usually is: in the even-handed middle ground."

Well, perhaps, but the even-handed middle ground becomes an increasingly elusive place in the television age. There were no American reporters in Kuwait when Iraq salted and pillaged that country; it was not in Iraq's interest to have them there. It was in Iraq's interest, however, to have reporters in Baghdad; when the war was over, Iraq kicked them out. Could the press have found a more even-handed middle ground here? Why, yes. It could have insisted that if it was going to be in Baghdad it must also be in Kuwait. Obviously, no network did insist on that.

The principal signs of television's search for a middle ground were "cleared by censor" titles; they were even-handedly applied to film approved by either American or Iraqi censors, showing skepticism of both sides. But the new neutral journalism also went a long way toward suggesting which side it was the more skeptical of. As long ago as last August, Michael Gartner, the president of NBC News, in a piece for the op-ed page of the *Wall Street Journal*, had alerted us to danger: "Here's something you should know about the war that's going on in the Gulf: much of the news that you read or hear or see is being censored."

Actually, the American part of the war had not begun yet, but that did not deter Gartner. He went on to quote, disdainfully, from a list of things the Pentagon did not want us to know. They included:

(1) Number of troops.
(2) Number of aircraft.
(3) Number of other equipment (e.g., artillery, tanks, radars, trucks, water "buffaloes," etc.).
(4) Names of military installations/geographic locations of U.S. military units in Saudi Arabia.
(5) Information regarding future operations.
(6) Information concerning security precautions at military installations in Saudi Arabia.

And so on, ending with "(9) Photography that would show level of security at military installations in Saudi Arabia" and "(10) Photography that would reveal the name of specific locations of military forces or installations."

While it would be easy to dismiss Gartner as merely frivolous, it may be assumed that his

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peculiar ideas about censorship and war and the military and the press got passed on to his reporters. Surely they were reflected in an NBC special, "America: The Realities of War," when Arthur Kent, the NBC correspondent in Saudi Arabia, took on Pete Williams, the Pentagon spokesman in Washington.

"Why are you trying to put your hands so far into our business?" Kent asked peevishly. "We're not trying to tell you how to run the war. We're just trying to cover it. Why do you want to control us so completely?"

Williams did not mention Gartner's laundry list of complaints, although if he had he would have made a reasonable argument not just for controlling the press but for banning it altogether. Williams did not say either that some of the television coverage was so goofy the Pentagon might have thought its higher duty was to straighten it out. In an interview when the war was over, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf remarked that he had "basically turned the television off in the headquarters very early on because the reporting was so inaccurate I did not want my people to get confused."

On the same program in which he attacked Williams, Kent also offered a choice specimen of the reporting General Schwarzkopf probably had in mind:

"Saddam Hussein is a cunning man and nowhere does he show that more clearly than on a battlefield when he's under attack," Kent told Faith Daniels, who was anchoring the special.

"And that, Arthur, really seems to be this administration's greatest miscalculation," Daniels replied.

"That's right, Faith," Kent continued. "He is ruthless, but more than ruthless. In the past eleven days, he's surprised us. He's shown us a capable military mind, and he still seems to know exactly what he's doing."

With "reporting" like that, is it any wonder that 57 percent of the respondents in one poll said the military should exercise more, not less, control over the press, and that 88 percent in another poll supported censorship? For, in addition to the other problems—moral, political, and professional—it has created, the neutrality principle has evidently turned many otherwise intelligent people into fools.

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Black Leaders vs. Desert Storm

Arch Puddington

On the surface, the controversy over the role of black servicemen in the Gulf War revolved around complaints that black men and women were "disproportionately" represented among the troops assigned to Operation Desert Storm. Although blacks make up just 13 percent of the American population and approximately 15 percent of the age group from which most servicemen are drawn, their percentage in the armed forces is higher: 20 percent throughout the services; 33 percent in the Army; 20 percent in the Marines; and 15 percent in the Navy and Air Force. As for Operation Desert Storm, blacks were some 25 percent of total forces and 30 percent of the ground units thought to be most vulnerable to heavy casualties.

Again and again, black elected officials, clergymen, editors, educators, and community activists pointed to these figures in opposing the war, and most Americans thus came to perceive the issue of disproportionality as central to the relative lack of black support for President Bush's policy as indicated by every opinion poll taken during the crisis. Black leaders were not, of course, the only prominent Americans to object to that policy in the days prior to the outbreak of hostilities. But with the possible exception of the mainline Protestant clergy, black leaders stood out for the uniformity and intensity of their opposition to the use of force in the liberation of Kuwait. Black leadership was also notable for the stridency of its criticism and for its willingness to attack America's prosecution of the war after hostilities had been initiated. At least one prominent figure, Martin Luther King, III, the son of the martyred civil-rights leader, went so far as to urge black troops to refuse to fight. "We've been fighting a war we've been told to fight, and right here we don't have rights," King told a Chicago audience several days after the war had begun. "Every black soldier ought to say, 'You all do what you want to. I'm not going to fight. This is not my war.'"

While King's advocacy of mutiny by soldiers in time of war represented an extreme position, his claim that blacks are systematically denied equal rights was often reiterated in commentaries which invariably cited President Bush's veto of the 1990 Civil Rights Act as justification for black coolness toward the war. Yet it should not be thought that the antiwar attitudes of the black leadership were solely, or even primarily, motivated by narrowly racial concerns like the veto of the civil-rights measure or the high percentages of black combat troops. In fact, the statements of black leaders often dwelt on such broad, non-racial questions as the nation's role in the post-cold-war world, the nature of the Kuwaiti government, America's alliance with Israel, even the legitimacy of war under any circumstances. And on these central foreign-policy concerns, the views of black leaders often proved radically at variance with the views of the American people.

This was especially true of the Democratic members of the Congressional Black Caucus. That only the lone Republican member of the Caucus, Gary Franks of Connecticut, should have supported the Solarz-Michel resolution giving President Bush sanction for the use of force comes as little surprise, considering the antiwar sentiment which prevailed among all but a few Democratic liberals in the days prior to the war. However, a clear difference between black and white liberals was revealed, in stark terms, several days *after* the war began, when the House of Representatives took up a resolution supporting the troops and commending President Bush in his role as commander-in-chief. While before the war 183 House members had opposed authorizing the President to use military force, only twelve voted "no" or merely "present" on the measure commending the troops and the President after the war had begun. Of those dozen Congressmen, ten were black; the two others were Henry Gonzalez, Democrat of Texas, and Bernard Sanders, Vermont's freshman Socialist Congressman.

Nor did the war's quick conclusion, or the fact that American casualties were minimal, or the fact that black combat deaths (at 15 percent) were proportionately much lower than the black troop presence in Desert Storm, or the glowing national tributes to black military performance, move the black congressional delegation from its all-out antiwar stance. This was vividly demonstrated by

Arch Puddington's most recent article in Commentary was "The Question of Black Leadership" (January 1991). He worked for some years as an aide to civil-rights leader Bayard Rustin, and is the author of *Failed Utopias* (ICS Press).

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the response of black Congressmen to yet a third measure relating to the Desert Storm operation, a routine $15-billion supplementary appropriation overwhelmingly approved after the war's successful conclusion. Of only eighteen Congressmen who opposed the appropriation, fully fifteen were members of the Black Caucus.

Aside from their votes, black Congressmen were also notable for the harshness of their attacks on the war—and on President Bush personally—and, at the same time, for their seeming lack of concern about Saddam Hussein's occupation of Kuwait, the plight of the Kuwaiti people, the threat posed by Iraq to Israel and other friendly nations in the region, or the implications of Saddam's past use of chemical weapons and his drive to acquire a nuclear potential.

Like other critics, most black Congressmen saw the war as hinging almost exclusively on control of the Gulf's oil wealth. Congressman Charles Rangel of New York declared that the crisis was the result of "dipstick diplomacy that says we must expose our young people to death for oil." Congressman Floyd Flake, also of New York, asserted that "American blood should not be spilled for not [*sic*] one drop of oil." Congresswoman Maxine Waters of California went a step further, advancing the thesis that the war was about America's "having the ability to leverage this country against the European [oil] market . . . and Japan." A more radical note was struck by Congressman Gus Savage of Illinois, who argued that the real problem was not Saddam Hussein's aggression but rather

> resource exploitation . . . where developed nations exploit the resources of undeveloped nations so that the undeveloped nations suffer increasing poverty . . . while the developed nations with the Eurocentric culture, the capitalist economy, prosper.

Another favored, if worn-out, cliché dragged in during the congressional debate was the notion of war as nothing more than the young being dispatched to slaughter by tired old men for the enrichment of elites or to further a pointless geopolitical goal. Congressman Ron Dellums of California stated that, in the end, "old men will sit down around a table to solve political problems after young men have died." To which Congressman Charles Hayes of Illinois added his opposition to the idea that "a bunch of old men should be determining whether our young men should risk their lives in an attempt to preserve revenue for mega-rich oil companies and Arab royalty."

Some Black Caucus members seemed close to embracing a pacifist stance. "Only a madman would want to go to war," Dellums said, "because war is killing, death, and destruction, nothing more, nothing less." Congressman Major Owens of New York saw war as useless slaughter: "My conscience tells me that if I vote for all this unnecessary killing, this mass murder, I become an accessory to murder." (Owens cannot be accused of inconsistency: after the war, he charged the United States with having behaved "almost the way we behaved at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.")

As for the fate of Kuwait, then groaning under Iraqi control, in speeches during the crucial debate prior to the war authorization, most Black Caucus members simply avoided the subject—an unusual omission given that this was the very issue which had provided the basis for the approval by the UN Security Council of the use of force. But several spoke of the Kuwaitis in tones of derision. "Two of the most undemocratic, oppressive nations on the face of the earth," was the description of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait given by William Clay of Missouri, while Kweisi Mfume of Maryland noted that "Kuwait by no means represented Jeffersonian democracy." And Hayes, after dismissing Kuwaitis as "wealthy people who inherited their wealth," managed to sneer at the foreigners, including hundreds of Americans, who had been held hostage by Saddam Hussein during the first months of the crisis as "people who were over there, making money."

It is, of course, true that neither Kuwait nor Saudi Arabia qualifies as a democracy. But Kuwait had made important concessions to democratic forces in the year prior to its occupation, and had earned a reputation as one of the more tolerant societies in the Middle East. In any event, the same black Congressmen who held Kuwait's human-rights record up to scorn were hardly known in the past for applying strict democratic standards to third-world countries. The Black Caucus, for instance, had been an enthusiastic supporter of Grenada's New Jewel Movement, an organization openly disdainful of parliamentary niceties, and individual members of the Caucus—among them Ron Dellums and Gus Savage—have expressed highly favorable opinions of Fidel Castro despite the Cuban dictator's totalitarian rule and the pervasive militarism of Cuban life.

In contrast to the confused logic and the double standards which marked their comments on the nature of the various Middle Eastern countries involved in the crisis, prominent blacks seemed genuinely moved by the prospect of heavy American casualties, especially during a ground campaign. Such fears were understandable in view of the widespread, and, as we now know, widely inaccurate predictions of tens of thousands of dead and wounded American soldiers issued both by the antiwar movement and by various military analysts. And the sincerity of black fears stood in notable contrast to the hypocrisy of peace-movement spokesmen as *they* anticipated massive U.S. combat deaths: how often did we hear one or another antiwar leader link the success of his cause to the return of thousands of body bags?

Yet even on this score there were hints that

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blacks, too, were not above exploiting war casualties to further political objectives. Thus, an activist black clergyman was quoted in the Washington *Post* as suggesting that black war dead might fuel a revival of the civil-rights protest movement:

> Funerals become by nature political events, similar to what has happened in South Africa, and there would be tremendous growth in the antiwar movement in the black community [in response to massive black casualties].

And, in fact, the Reverend Jesse Jackson and other well-known figures shamelessly used the occasion of a funeral for a black New Jersey soldier killed in action as a forum to attack the government's prosecution of the war and to demand enactment of civil-rights legislation.

In general, for blacks of a leftist or strongly black-nationalist bent, the war functioned as a convenient weapon for the advancement of any number of ideologies or causes. Jesse Jackson told a rally that every bomb dropped on Baghdad deprived blacks of roads and schools. For Jack O'Dell, international-affairs director of Jackson's Rainbow Coalition, the war's lesson was that "racism has become the central ingredient in the idea of national chauvinism." Ron Daniels, former national director of the Rainbow Coalition, viewed the conflict through both nationalist and Marxist prisms, a perspective which led him to praise Saddam Hussein. Saddam, Daniels wrote, was being put down because he had tried to "break the back" of colonialism in the Middle East, in the course of which he had become a threat to "Uncle Tom" regimes like Kuwait. For Daniels, President Bush's New World Order amounted to "a new system of global white power and supremacy with the United States at the helm." As for Molefi Asante, an influential figure in the movement for an Afrocentric curriculum, Iraq was the latest in a long line of third-world victims of American imperialism. Meanwhile, the *Amsterdam News*, New York's leading black newspaper, managed to link the war to a plan to "re-whiten America by luring more and more Eastern Europeans to these shores, thereby reducing employment opportunities for black Americans."

Probably no group opposed to the war could equal the black clergy for bitterness and moral castigation. The Reverend Calvin O. Butts, III, the pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church, Harlem's most prestigious parish, told his congregants that President Bush had lied about the war, and he accused the media of working with the government to conceal the facts. The Reverend Herbert Daughtry called President Bush "the invader," and said the U.S. was a "greater monster" than Saddam Hussein. Father Lawrence Lucas declared at an antiwar rally that "there is no reason to justify the killing of people by George Bush because of oil." And a statement issued by a group of black leaders, but spearheaded by activist clergymen, described the war as "immoral and unspiritual" as well as "wrong, unnecessary, unprincipled, and dirty."

America was not the only target of criticism; a number of black clergy and other high-visibility black figures seized the opportunity to restate their distaste for Israel and for Israel's close ties to the United States. Father Lucas, for example, theorized that the war had been declared in order to "improve U.S. support to Israel," while the Reverend Ben Chavis, executive director of the Commission on Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ, declared that blacks should be in solidarity with Palestinians because "undergirding the whole conflict in the Gulf is the unresolved issue of the rights of the Palestinian people." In New York, Mayor David Dinkins drew sharp criticism from a number of prominent blacks for having joined Congressman Rangel in a wartime visit to Israel, a step Dinkins explained as a gesture of solidarity during a period when Israel was under Iraqi missile assault. Dinkins, it should be stressed, had strongly opposed the war, but this fact was deemed irrelevant by critics like Reverend Butts, who accused the mayor of being more concerned with New York's Jewish voters "than with his own community," or like the radical attorney Colin Moore, who blasted Dinkins for having failed to visit "South Africa or other countries on the [African] continent where people are involved in liberation struggles." Congressman Rangel, a consistent and outspoken opponent of the war, was nevertheless forced to end his speech prematurely at a Harlem rally after he was jeered for defending Israel.

In the midst of hostilities, Jesse Jackson was heard to complain that the views of black leaders were being ignored by the Bush administration in its making of war policy. Whether Jackson was serious in suggesting that Bush consult with those who share the global outlook of Dellums, Butts, or Jackson himself is unclear. In the past, of course, wartime presidents did meet with civil-rights leaders over the denial of basic rights suffered by the country's black citizens. But during World War II, the issues which Walter White and A. Philip Randolph raised with President Franklin D. Roosevelt were altogether crucial for blacks and for the successful prosecution of the war; one of those issues, ironically, was securing the right of the black soldier to fight for his country. To be sure, Randolph threatened a protest march in response to the widespread exclusion of black workers from defense-industry jobs. But Randolph was also committed to an Allied victory; and he acted in the hope that in addition to gaining crucial rights for blacks, his wartime crusades would strengthen the patriotic bonds between blacks and their country.

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The message of Randolph's generation of civil-rights leader—"Give us our rights and we will gladly fight for our country"—was far different from the embittered refrain of today's black leadership: "This is not our war."

Jesse Jackson, of course, believes he should be recognized as a foreign-policy expert as well as a protest leader. Yet statements he made before and during Desert Storm suggest his grasp of world affairs remains essentially the same as in 1984, when as a presidential candidate he delivered himself of absurd chants which likened Fidel Castro and Daniel Ortega to Christ. "There were no troops in Canada on our border about to bomb us," Jackson said shortly after the war began, summing up his grasp of the Middle East. To an antiwar rally, Jackson screamed that "When that war breaks out, our youth will burn first." And in the most tortured reasoning, Jackson announced that the establishment of the January 15 deadline for an Iraqi withdrawal "makes no sense" since President Bush "did not confirm a date for the liberation of South Africa or the liberation of Central America."

Unfortunately, the perspective on world affairs revealed in Jackson's various pronouncements prevails among those within the black political establishment who focus attention on foreign-policy issues. Insofar as there exists a distinctly black global view, it is not merely at variance with the American people's concept of their country's place in the world, but wildly so. The assumptions which instruct this mindset are a jumbled and often contradictory combination of selective pacifism, profound mistrust of American goals, and lingering identification with radical, anti-democratic third-world regimes and liberation movements. These assumptions led during the 1980's to a harshly critical response to the invasion of Grenada (heedless of the action's popularity in Grenada itself), an unrelenting animus toward defense spending, and an opposition to American support for anti-Communist insurgencies, including the struggle against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

In a sense, then, the passionate opposition to the Gulf War conforms to a pattern of hostility to the exercise of American power, whatever the context. Nevertheless, the unrelenting opposition to the war remains highly unsettling due to its fervor and near-unanimity. Of generally recognized black leaders, only a few—Congressman William Gray of Pennsylvania, John E. Jacob of the Urban League, and Benjamin Hooks of the NAACP were among the most prominent—acknowledged the moral and political importance of responding to Saddam Hussein's aggression. Furthermore, segments of the leadership seemed to find the issue of black military "overrepresentation" less a cause for complaint than a weapon in the promotion of an anti-interventionist foreign policy.

THE question of who fights for America is, in fact, worthy of serious examination. Blacks, Hispanics, and whites from modest economic backgrounds predominate in today's armed forces, and will continue to do so as long as America opts for a volunteer military. Although the awesome performance of U.S. forces in Desert Storm should go a long way toward resolving the debate over the battlefield effectiveness of the volunteer force, an argument against the current arrangement can still be made on the grounds that a volunteer force is incompatible with the country's democratic traditions.

But the alternative remains a reinstitution of the draft, an option which no black leader, or any antiwar stalwart, has endorsed. Here it is worth recalling that blacks were among the most fervent champions of the volunteer force during the debates which preceded its adoption in 1973 and which then focused on its troubled first years. In response to misgivings expressed by white politicians and military authorities that the composition of a volunteer army might be "too black," prominent blacks, like then-Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, responded with barely concealed rage. Mrs. Chisholm, herself no hawk, fumed: "All this talk about a volunteer army being poor and black is not an indication of 'concern' for the black and the poor, but rather of the deep fear of the possibility of a black army." As for the critical question of how black troops might react to suffering "disproportionate" casualties, Ron Dellums, no less, issued a statement distinguished by an uncompromising emphasis on individual responsibility:

> Black volunteers understand what joining the military means. If, through exercise of free choice by individuals, there are [proportionately] more blacks in the military than in the population, we should expect a proportionately greater sacrifice. The whole idea of a volunteer army is that the individual will take this risk and this responsibiltiy by his or her free choice.

Speaking around the same time, the civil-rights leader Vernon Jordan detected a double standard in white fears about the possibility of high black casualty rates:

> It is interesting that while American servicemen were fighting and dying in Vietnam there was little concern about the disproportionate numbers of blacks in front-line combat units and the casualty lists. Criticisms of the armed forces should be based on real issues, not on false racial concerns.

Black leaders were equally adamant on the sensitive issue of how black soldiers would react if assigned to "restore order" in riot-torn American inner cities, or in some controversial third-world setting, such as a civil war in Africa or Latin America. Margaret Bush Wilson, then-chairman of the NAACP, regarded suggestions that blacks

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might balk at such assignments as a "smokescreen thrown up by more subtle, sophisticated racists." Similarly, Clifford L. Alexander, Jr., who served as Jimmy Carter's Secretary of the Army, dismissed as racist the notion that blacks would refuse duty in certain parts of the world, including even South Africa.

Thus, right up until the Gulf crisis, the public posture of America's black leadership toward the volunteer army was one of wholehearted endorsement. In part, this was due to the fact that the volunteer military functioned as an instrument of upward mobility for thousands of black youths. There was also an understandable defensiveness over the subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle mutterings that a heavily black military would be an inferior or even disloyal military. In 1978, for example, then-Congressman Paul N. McCloskey, Jr. told an audience of Stanford alumni that it was "dangerous to have an all-black army," and added, by way of amplification, that "the Mafia was able to maintain its political and financial success by infiltrating the New York police department." Blacks, of course, were all too aware that the apprehensions which McCloskey was injudicious enough to express in a semi-public forum were being echoed, *sotto voce*, by other political and military officials.

There was, however, something a bit too glib in the assertions of Chisholm, Jordan, and others that the racial composition of the military was a subject not worthy of discussion. Jordan was not altogether accurate in declaring that the country had been unconcerned with the rates of black casualties during the Vietnam war. In fact, after civil-rights groups complained about the high percentages of black casualties suffered during the war's early years, military authorities took measures affecting the assignment of combat troops which substantially reduced those rates.

Nor were black leaders guiltless of obstructing the military's efforts at racial harmony. Martin Luther King, Jr., in addition to deploring Vietnam as a distraction from President Johnson's domestic agenda, came to accept the interpretation of that war as a form of racist imperialism, and urged blacks to boycott it. There were, as well, the demagogues of Black Power, ready to charge, as Stokely Carmichael did, that the war's hidden purpose was to "get rid of black people in the ghettos" by using them as "cannon fodder." While the degree to which Black Power ideology infected the troops is unclear, both black and white observers agree it was a force during the war's later years, particularly among black draftees from the Northern inner cities. At the same time, white-supremacist groups also gained a disturbingly wide following in the Army and Marines.

In contrast to all this, today, in the wake of Desert Storm's success, the military is being hailed as the most successfully integrated institution in American society. "The Army is the only place in America where a white will routinely be bossed around by black superiors," comments Charles Moskos, an authority on military-society relations. Journalists investigating the state of race relations in Desert Storm found a level of cooperation that was an inspirational story in itself. Repeatedly, black servicemen and -women stressed that in the armed forces they were treated with respect; that prejudice, if it existed, was much less significant than in civilian life; and that those assigned to Desert Storm had been too busy doing their jobs to worry about matters like skin color.

An obvious question is whether American society can learn anything from the military's success in race relations. Some civil-rights leaders have already announced the lesson: affirmative action works, and what is needed is passage of the latest version of the Civil Rights Restitution Act.

Now, it is true that the military has adopted a number of measures specifically designed to stimulate integration and tolerance: modest efforts to encourage the promotion of minorities into the officer ranks, special race-relations training courses for officers, and a strict policy of not tolerating prejudice within the various forces. These measures have been important, particularly as they send a reassuring signal to minorities about the atmosphere awaiting them during their service.

Ultimately, however, the military has become a racial success story primarily because of certain characteristics inherent in a volunteer service. To begin with, the abolition of the draft has eliminated those who resented service or the close interracial cooperation which the military demands. More to the point, the enhanced pay, benefits, and educational opportunities ensured that the military would draw better-educated, highly motivated enlistees, something which in turn has enabled it to strengthen already tough enlistment standards. If affirmative action has played a modest role in the successful integration of the armed forces, a much greater share of the credit belongs to the military's commitment to merit and standards, a quality sharply at odds with the logic of affirmative action. Black servicemen, in fact, boast higher educational credentials than white enlistees, and there are no special racial or ethnic admissions tracks of the type which have contributed to the unhealthy state of race relations on the nation's college campuses.

Reflecting on the controversy over the role of black troops in the Gulf, Edwin Dorn of the Brookings Institution has observed:

> Man for man and woman for woman, this military is much better than the draft-era military of Vietnam—and I say that to address all those who think blacks and women have ruined standards in the military. The fact is that if you

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> go out and talk to those soldiers at the 82nd Airborne or talk to the soldiers in the tank units at Fort Knox, they don't think of themselves as cannon fodder or victims, they think of themselves as professionals doing a job they are very well trained to do.

The *esprit de corps* which impresses Dorn, and which was vividly on display in interviews with Gulf War participants, reflects more than anything else pride in an institution which demands a high level of performance and rewards it when delivered. When asked their attitude toward military service, black troops invariably mention the opportunity to accomplish a mission they consider important; they mention fair treatment and an atmosphere of relative equality; they mention self-respect. They do not mention affirmative-action programs, racial preference, or reverse discrimination. Nor does anyone think that affirmative action is responsible for the emergence of such high-ranking black officers as the commandant of West Point, the deputy commander of Desert Storm, and, of course, Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

BY ANY standard, Powell would seem an ideal figure of inspiration for black youth. The son of Jamaican immigrants, both of whom worked in New York's garment district, Powell received his early military training not at West Point or Virginia Military Institute but through the ROTC program at the City College of New York. Although officially integrated, the military Powell entered during the 50's was by no means the equal-opportunity employer of today, and Powell encountered his share of discrimination during stints at Southern bases like Fort Bragg, North Carolina and Fort Benning, Georgia. Yet Powell's credo on racial matters has been to regard his color as other people's problem, not his—an optimistic philosophy which helps explain his rise within the military.

For many black leaders, however, General Powell's commanding and articulate presence has posed something of a dilemma. By all accounts greatly respected by America's black population, Powell was generally ignored by black war opponents, many of whom in other forums have bitterly lamented the dearth of strong, successful, black men who could serve as examples for troubled youth. But the problem presented by Powell's highly visible role went much deeper than his association with a war of which black leaders disapproved. For as we have seen, many black leaders considered that war not just wrong, but immoral. By extension, Powell might well be regarded as a war criminal; he was not, after all, an infantryman just following orders, and if he did not make the political decision to declare war against Iraq, he was a crucial participant in the formulation of war-fighting tactics and strategy, including the bombing of Iraqi cities, the very thing Congressman Owens must have had in mind when he compared America's tactics in the Gulf to the use of atomic weapons against Japan.

Powell was also unsympathetic to complaints about the high percentage of blacks in the armed forces. Typically, he did not shy away from the possible consequences once war broke out:

> If one out of four, roughly one out of five, is black, if the whole force accepts casualties, what would you wish me to do? Move the blacks from the positions they're in so that they will have a lower percentage of casualties? Every part of the force, whether it's Hispanic American, Pacific American, or lower-income white soldiers will probably sustain casualties in relationship to the percentage that they represent in the overall force.
>
> What you keep wanting me to say is that this is disproportionate or wrong. I don't think it's disproportionate or wrong. I think it's a decision the American people made when they said have a volunteer army and allow those to serve who want to serve.

Powell also tartly noted that some of those complaining about disproportionality had, a few months before the crisis, complained to him that proposed reductions in the post-cold-war armed forces would disproportionately injure blacks by denying them the opportunity for advancement through military careers. And as for the argument that the high black military presence was due to a semi-involuntary "economic draft," Powell noted that blacks, as well as other groups (he might have mentioned poor Southern whites), had traditionally favored military careers for such reasons as education, advancement, "adventure," and simply because the military life appealed to them.

This was so even though, historically, blacks were treated no better by the military than by other American institutions. Throughout the first half of this century, quotas ensured a relatively low percentage of black troop representation, few blacks were promoted to the officer ranks, and no black officer was placed in command of white subordinates. Influenced by its strong Southern traditions, the military accepted as fact just about every racial myth of the day: that blacks were lazy and insensitive to racial slurs, that they preferred white to black officers, could not be taught to fly, or lacked the reflexes for armored combat (a special prejudice of General George Patton). As one historian put it, the prevailing attitude of the military establishment at the beginning of World War II could be summed up in the crude motto: "You know how niggers are."

TESTIMONY to the depth of such prejudice is the shameful treatment of retired General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. during his years at West Point, from which he was the first black to graduate in this century. Davis, who went

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on to become the commander of the Black Eagles, the legendary World War II flying unit, has just published his memoirs.* In them he recounts that, while at West Point, for no other reason than race, he was subjected to "silencing," a practice otherwise reserved for cadets found guilty of honor-code violations. Except as required in the course of duty, no cadet would speak to Davis, and no one would share his room. After graduation, Davis's encounters with racial discrimination continued. A commanding officer encouraged him to enroll in law school and seek a political career; it was not "logical," the officer explained, for a black to command whites.

Infatuated with airplanes, Davis was initially rejected for training as a pilot since it was Army policy that blacks not be admitted to flight school; once, an Army doctor invented a history of epilepsy to justify rejecting Davis. Eventually, however, a group of black flyers was trained and sent into action in North Africa and Europe. Still, recalcitrant commanders attempted to have the unit reassigned to non-combat duty, reasoning, as a report from a high Army Air Corps official stated, that "The Negro type has not the proper reflexes to make a first-class fighter pilot." In spite of everything, however, Davis and his comrades prevailed, and their record of distinguished service was ultimately hailed throughout America.

The heroism of the black flyers, Davis believes, advanced both the Allied cause and the cause of the Negro, whose just demands for equality were growing more insistent as the war progressed. And there was a third cause to which Davis was deeply and personally attached: the cause of blacks in the military. Bolstered by an unyielding personal code which forbade his reacting with bitterness to acts of prejudice, Davis nevertheless remembers every insult, and he candidly admits to a preference for overseas assignments because of the American racial environment. At the same time he remains devoted to the military; in his view there is no more honorable profession. And he believes that America, with all its faults, is worth fighting for.

Davis and his Black Eagles served as an inspiration to past generations, and Colin Powell and the black troops of the Gulf conflict stand as a source of national pride today. As Haynes Johnson of the Washington *Post* wrote: "Black combat veterans [can serve] not only as role models for other blacks but also for whites." Yet few black leaders seem to have been shaken from their fixation on the theme of blacks as cannon fodder, or as victims of an economic "draft." No wonder, then, that one already sees evidence of black military resentment at the lack of support from black civilian leaders. Hearing criticism where they strongly believe that praise is warranted, black military men are beginning to ask, as the deputy commander of Desert Storm, General Calvin Waller, did: "What are our leaders doing in our communities to get our young black men off drugs? What are they doing to keep them in school or from dying in the streets?"

THERE has been much speculation about the broad political and cultural repercussions of the American military performance in the Gulf. President Bush's assertion that the war has enabled America to get out from under the Vietnam syndrome implies much more than a renewed respect for the military. Broadly speaking, the Vietnam syndrome entailed a reduced faith in America, in its world role, its key institutions, in its ability to solve its domestic ills, of which race relations counts as among the most important. Certainly one positive effect will be a diminution of negative views about blacks among whites. Future opinion polls will probably not find, as did a National Opinion Research Center poll taken before the war, that 51 percent of white Americans question the patriotism of blacks.

We do not know to what degree the whites in that poll were responding to statements by the nation's black leaders, although it seems reasonable to suppose that this was a significant factor. Unfortunately, a change in the perspective of the current black political leadership is highly unlikely. In contrast to many Americans who initially opposed the war but eventually came to identify with the goal of freeing Kuwait and handing Saddam Hussein a resounding setback, most black leaders seemed as dismayed by America's winning the war as with its having entered it in the first place. On the other hand, while polls showed blacks consistently less supportive of the war than other Americans, ordinary blacks were much more likely to support it than were their leaders. Indeed, an ABC-Washington *Post* poll taken after the war registered a stunning 77-percent black approval rating for President Bush, a figure which principally reflects deep pride in identifying with an *American* victory and a repudiation of the slogan: "This is not our war."

That this pride is not shared by most black leaders is tragic—tragic mainly because it reflects blindness to signs of positive change and also because it betrays a view of world affairs preposterous in many of its essentials and ultimately irrelevant to the future course of American political life.

* *Benjamin O. Davis, Jr.: American.* Smithsonian Institution Press, 442 pp., $19.95.

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Israel After the Gulf War

David Bar-Illan

OF THE two major shocks Israelis suffered in the Gulf War, the "Scud trauma" may have dealt a heavier blow to their sense of themselves than anything since the state's inception. The nagging daily fear, the flight of tens of thousands from their homes, the cowering in sealed rooms, and, above all, having to accept the ordeal passively were all too reminiscent of a pogrom, while the feeling of helplessness was precisely the kind of experience Israel had been founded to eliminate. To Holocaust survivors, the expectation that one of the Scud warheads might carry poison gas added a flavor of Auschwitz to the ordeal.

Not that the policy of restraint was unpopular. Israelis had nothing but admiration for American determination and political courage in pursuing the war. And despite the abuse Israel had suffered at the hands of the Bush administration in the previous coalition-courting months; despite the incredulousness at the display of American deference to Arab regimes whose very existence depended on American willingness to die in their defense; and despite the general belief that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) could reduce, if not eliminate, the Scud threat with greater effectiveness than the coalition airforce, defying the American wish that Israel stay out of the war was unthinkable. Nor could Israelis imagine a more unacceptable scenario than an accidental clash between Israeli and American pilots in Iraqi skies (which would almost certainly have happened if Israel had tried to retaliate without American permission and cooperation).

But many, including even left-wingers and prominent "peace-camp" followers, feared that Israel would lose its deterrence credibility with the Arab states. Before January 15, 1991 it was assumed that the threat of a "massive, telling response" would keep Saddam Hussein from striking at Israel and opening a second front. But in fact Saddam did fulfill his promise to hit Israel, while Israel failed to deliver on its threat to hit back—a dangerous precedent indeed.

Ironically, however, the impression in the Arab world that Israel could be struck with impunity was ameliorated not by Defense Minister Moshe Arens's repeated assurances that Israel would retaliate at a time of its own choosing, but by Arab propaganda excesses. For example, in a television appearance with King Hussein of Jordan, the PLO chief Yasir Arafat stated, "Of course, as you know, the Israelis are launching cruise missiles against Iraq from the Negev." The Iraqi ambassador to France, who served as Saddam's conduit to the Western media during the first weeks of the war, asserted that the Scud attacks on Israel were justified because Israeli pilots, flying repainted planes, were participating in the bombing of Iraq from bases in Saudi Arabia and Turkey. And the incessant lumping together of Israel and the U.S. as the "American-Zionist" enemy made it appear that Israel was not only responding to the Scud attacks but actively participating in the destruction of Iraq.

THIS "Arab street" perception of Israeli involvement, and the Egyptian, Saudi, and even Syrian assurances that an Israeli counterblow would be "understood," should have taken the wind out of the American argument that *real* Israeli involvement would unglue the coalition. That the U.S. persisted in prohibiting Israeli action bolsters the suspicion that the administration simply did not want Israel to prove indispensable to its own defense.

Thus, while praised for its restraint, Israel was also reminded even before the war was over of how much the U.S. was doing to protect it. Having pooh-poohed the Scuds as less dangerous than a Georgia thunderstorm—a remark he must have rued when 28 American servicemen were killed by one—General H. Norman Schwarzkopf repeatedly told the press that efforts to destroy the launchers would continue even though those stationed in Western Iraq threatened Israel, but not American troops. Whether Secretary of State James Baker actually said to Arens that American soldiers were shedding their blood to defend Israel, as was reported in the press, or whether the "remark" was merely leaked by someone in the State Department, is immaterial. Clearly, the impression the Bush administration tried to impart was that Israel was a strategic irrelevancy in this war and

DAVID BAR-ILLAN, whose article, *"60 Minutes* & the Temple Mount," appeared in our February issue, is editorials editor of the Jerusalem *Post*.

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that it "owed" the U.S. for its protection. Israel's real contributions to the war—the weapon systems developed and manufactured in Israel which were widely used by American troops, including pilotless reconnaissance drones, computerized firing systems in helicopter gunships, and "popeye" smart bombs—were assiduously played down by the administration.

To make its demand for Israeli restraint palatable, the administration delivered batteries of Patriot anti-missile missiles immediately after the first Scud strike. The accompanying American crews faced no danger in manning the batteries, but their presence in Israel violated another fundamental tenet of Israeli defense doctrine: that no foreign troops would ever be asked to defend the country. (Knowing how sensitive Israel is on this issue, the Palestinian political scientist Saeb Erakat taunted two Israeli officials, Binyamin Netanyahu and Ehud Olmert, during a CNN debate in early March with, "You are nothing but a protectorate, being defended by foreign soldiers.")

But the Patriots proved a poor substitute for Israeli action against the Scuds. Designed primarily as anti-aircraft missiles, they had been modified to intercept missiles—in itself a formidable achievement—but their effectiveness was limited to small areas. They would deflect an incoming missile at relatively low altitudes, thereby affording protection to military installations. But over cities their ability to divert the warhead from one part of a populated area to another was of little use. In fact, the debris from the Patriots caused almost as much damage as the Scuds. Nor was American air action against the Scuds in Iraq particularly effective. At war's end at least five fixed launchers and a few dozen mobile ones were still intact.

Not surprisingly, those who had ardently advocated Israeli withdrawal from Judea, Samaria, and Gaza found in Israel's vulnerability to Scuds launched from a country which did not even share a border with Israel additional proof of the irrelevance of geographical buffers. The Bush administration, too, from the President on down, lectured Israel on the subject. It was an incongruous position for the government of a country which had once risked nuclear war with the Sovet Union—whose ICBMs could eradicate every American city—over a few missiles in Cuba. Yet such arguments have been made by virtually every administration since 1967. Even George Shultz, whose concern for Israel's security was undoubtedly sincere, touted it when he was Ronald Reagan's Secretary of State.

If anything, however, the Scud attacks only proved that advanced weapons have made strategic depth and topographic advantage more important than ever. For what rendered the Scuds useless as a strategic weapon was the distance—400 miles—from the nearest Iraqi launchers to Israel. The missiles could only terrorize the population, not hit military targets.

It is true that more accurate missiles are in existence, but even a concentrated shower of advanced missiles could not bring Israel to its knees. For one thing, its military industry is now developing the Arrow missile—an SDI project assigned to Israel with mostly American financing—which promises to be an effective defense against surface-to-surface missiles. Yet if Israel were standing alone, it would not depend only on defensive measures. Israel has always preferred and will probably continue to prefer preemptive measures. Had the IDF been free to deal with the Iraqi Scuds, it is doubtful that 39 missiles would have reached Israel. In any case, what is quite certain is that with Scuds alone Iraq could never have conquered even relatively defenseless Kuwait, let alone Israel.

On the other hand, had Israel relinquished the "territories," as its own peace camp and the various American administrations since 1968 have urged, Saddam Hussein would not have been limited to ineffectual missile attacks from remote bases in Western Iraq. The whole land mass from the Iranian border to the outskirts of Tel Aviv would have become Saddam-land. The mostly Palestinian population of Jordan, like the inhabitants of the territories (as well as some Israeli Arabs), were openly and enthusiastically pro-Saddam. In some cases they actively spied for Iraq. Had Israel withdrawn from the territories, the new Palestinian state which would inevitably have been formed there and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (assuming it had not yet been taken over by the new Palestinian state) would have welcomed Saddam Hussein with open arms.

Nor could Israel, no longer in a commanding strategic position on the Judea-Samaria mountains and the Jordan river, have deterred such a move. Moreover, with Saddam controlling the whole area and threatening Syria's southern flank, the chances of Syria joining the anti-Saddam coalition rather than the Eastern front against Israel would have been slim indeed. Even if the Iraqi army would not have reached Israel's borders in force, missiles from the Samarian mountains, eight miles from Tel Aviv's center, could have caused devastating civilian casualties, scored direct hits on military targets, and paralyzed movement on Israel's roads.

To claim, as some doves do, that a Palestinian state in the territories would have been safely "demilitarized" is to ignore another lesson of the Gulf War: that mobile missiles can escape the scrutiny of the most sophisticated satellites and spy planes. Even if no missiles would have been introduced into the new state, the mere presence of Arab electronic command-and-control centers in those mountains could have rendered the Scuds more effective. Nor could there have been any way to prevent the launching of terrorist operations from the new state, which the IDF-imposed curfew

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in the territories during the war effectively forestalled.

Of course, the first sign of hostilities would have prompted Israel to launch its own preemptive strike. But then war with the Eastern-front countries—Iraq, Syria, and Jordan—and perhaps an even wider regional conflagration would have been inevitable, and it would have begun with enemy toops in positions commanding 80 percent of Israel's population and 60 percent of its industry.

It was this realization of "what would have happened if . . ." which constituted the second shock of the Gulf War. It was, naturally, more of a shock to the peace camp than to hawks who had always been persuaded that withdrawal from the territories was reckless if not suicidal. But the display of sweeping Palestinian support for Saddam Hussein and of unmitigated hatred for Israelis, the dancing on the roofs when Scuds landed in Tel Aviv and Haifa, the jingle sung by Arabs throughout the territories and in some areas in Israel ("O Saddam, dear Saddam, drown Tel Aviv with chemicals"), and the mindless bravado of the Palestinian man-in-the-street ("I don't care if the chemicals kill me and my family as long as they kill the Israelis") startled even the most cynical.

The doves had to agree with right-winger MK Geula Cohen's observation that had it not been for Israel's presence in the territories, the dancers on the roofs would have employed Katyushas, not jingles. One peace-camp leader, MK Yossi Sarid, who soon after the invasion of Kuwait and the PLO's declaration of support for Saddam Hussein wrote a scathing diatribe against the Palestinian leadership suggesting a suspension of contacts—a "don't call me, I'll call you" separation—now wrote an even sharper rebuke, amounting to a bill of divorcement. And when Sari Nusseibeh, the mild-mannered "moderate" pro-PLO leader in Jerusalem, was arrested for spying and the Israeli government was bombarded with protests from the Bush administration and the Israeli Left, Sarid—who was privy to the details of the case—uncharacteristically defended the government's action. "I would sentence him to ten years," he said. The peace-camp romance with the PLO seemed to be over.

That Sarid was the first of the peace-camp leaders to disavow the PLO was not surprising. Unlike many of his fellow doves, he never had any illusions about what the Arabs wanted. He acknowledged years ago what most doves are admitting only now: that "territorial compromise"—the partitioning of the territories as intended by the Allon plan (which would leave a quarter of the West Bank in Israel's hands)—is an empty slogan. What the world community and the administration mean by "territories for peace"—regardless of the language of UN Resolution 242, which pointedly mentions "territories," not *the* territories or *all* territories, and regardless of the fact that the Camp David accords were in any event supposed to supersede 242—is Israel's withdrawal to the 1967 lines with minor adjustments. The Bush administration seems to hold the view that only the fate of East Jerusalem and the Old City is negotiable; although it considers them part of the West Bank, it may advocate a compromise to accommodate Jewish access to the Western Wall.

Officially, the Labor party still promotes the Allon plan, but its doves now realize that no Arab leader would be able to accept only three-quarters of the West Bank and live. (During the 1988 election campaign, Labor presented a modification of the Allon plan known as the "generals' plan," devised by leading generals turned Labor politicians. It provided for the stationing of IDF troops in the Jordan valley, and early-warning-station installations in the Samarian mountains. The notion that any Arab would accept such an arrangement, or that Israeli soldiers on the Jordan river could survive wedged between a Palestinian "entity" and Jordan, was so preposterous that the plan became a campaign liability.)

Most Israelis would be willing to exchange *some* territory for peace. Few, for example, would object to relinquishing Gaza or Jericho. But since no peace arrangement can realistically be expected in exchange for parts of the territories, the choice is between withdrawing to the 1967 lines and keeping control of *all* the territories. Moreover, despite the lip-service paid by the Bush administration to the right of Jews to live anywhere they wish, the implementation of "territories for peace" would mean that the 100,000 settlers in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, and perhaps even the 150,000 Jewish residents of Jerusalem suburbs beyond the Green Line, would have to be forcibly "transferred." Clearly, their safety under Arab rule could not be assured, nor would they want to live in an Arab state.

Sarid also realized long ago that Israel's departure from the territories meant the establishment not of a Palestinian "homeland," not of a confederated district of Jordan, but of a sovereign Palestinian state. Before the Gulf crisis, virtually all Israeli doves believed they could live peacefully with such a state. Now the "dancing on the roofs" has made some among them wonder if a state dominated by the PLO and the Islamic fundamentalists of Hamas and situated within rifle range of Israel's largest population centers would be an ideal solution after all.

Not that the doves have abandoned the idea of relinquishing the territories. They are still convinced that ruling over 1.5 million Arabs is morally untenable, ruinous to Israel's soul, harmful to its political and social fabric, and unacceptable to the world at large. But

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since the prospect of a Palestinian state now seems riskier than before, such moderate peace-camp leaders as MK Amnon Rubenstein, head of the Shinui ("change") party, and Labor MK Shevah Weiss now recommend entering a defense treaty with the United States and accepting American—and perhaps international—guarantees.

This coincides rather nicely with the thinking of the Bush administration, intent on having a permanent military presence in the area and establishing a *Pax Americana* in collaboration with its coalition partners. These partners have assured Secretary Baker that once Israel settles the "Palestinian problem"—i.e., withdraws to the 1967 lines—they would consider recognizing Israel and making peace. American guarantees, they say, should allay Israel's fears for its security. The administration, impatient with the lack of progress in the "peace process," may be persuaded that "territories for peace" plus "guarantees" is indeed the only available option, and pressure Israel accordingly.

One need not doubt America's good intentions toward Israel to be wary of relying on the U.S. as a guarantor. For while relinquishing land is permanent, circumstances, policies, and personalities which affect relations between the two countries are changeable. And experience shows that the U.S. is no less prone than any other country to giving its interests precedence over its signed commitments—even where Israel is concerned.

For example, it is difficult to recall—now that the IDF is equipped with American weapon systems and Israel receives billions in American aid—that an American arms embargo almost doomed the state at its inception; or that an American promise to supply Israel with arms was broken in 1955 in response to a retaliatory Israeli raid against terrorist infiltrators. And those who imagine that the Likud governments have carried U.S.-Israel relations to a new low may want to remember that the 1956 Sinai campaign brought not only a suspension by the Eisenhower administration of all talk of economic aid; the U.S. also threatened then to support UN sanctions, including the expulsion of Israel from the world organization, to block all United Jewish Appeal contributions, and to tolerate a Soviet assault on Israel without intervening.

When Israel then gave up all the territories taken in that campaign, the U.S. agreed to guarantee that Egypt would not return to the Gaza Strip, but soon reneged on this commitment. Before the 1967 war, the U.S. "could not find" Eisenhower's written commitment to Ben-Gurion to secure free navigation in the Tiran straits. (Egypt's blockade of the straits precipitated the Six-Day War.) After the war, though Israel's popularity rose to unprecedented heights, the Johnson administration suspended all arms shipments, including spare parts, in violation of signed contracts. (This was not done as punishment, but in the hope that such suspension would induce the Soviets to slow arms deliveries to Syria and Egypt.) Then in 1975, when Israel hesitated to sign an interim agreement with Egypt, the U.S. announced a "reassessment" of relations and again suspended all arms deliveries. Similar sanctions were imposed after Israel bombed the Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osirak in 1981.

To be sure, all these events are dwarfed by America's steadfast friendship, military and economic assistance, and often unique political backing of Israel. Nevertheless it is foolhardy to assume that it would always seem to be in America's national interest to guarantee Israel's security, to sacrifice treasure, let alone blood, to defend a small, oil-less, and strategically crippled Israel. Even if the U.S. wished to do so, it is doubtful that circumstances would always allow it to rescue Israel in time. It is far more likely that what Golda Meir once said in response to an offer of guarantees—"By the time you get here, we won't be here"—would prove as prophetic as it did in the case of Kuwait.

HAS the Gulf crisis, then, brought a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and to its offshoot, the Palestinian problem, no closer?

On the one hand, it may well be that, as in other festering world trouble spots—from Kashmir to Northern Ireland—there simply is no solution in sight. The democratic West, impatient with insolubles, finds it difficult to face such a possibility—particularly since in the case of Israel it is incessantly prodded by an Arab colossus, which is not only an indispensable energy source for the industrial countries but a huge marketplace for their goods, to convene an international conference and impose an Arab solution. Fearing Arab economic power, the West acts toward Arab regimes with mind-boggling timorousness. Throughout the Gulf crisis, the U.S. and its Western allies treated the demands of the Arab coalition partners as if Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf emirates were the benefactors, not the beneficiaries, of Desert Shield and Desert Storm; as if Arab lives were being risked to defend the West and not the other way around.

But, on the other hand, the Gulf War did seem to produce some new thinking. The administration has conceded that there have to be two tracks (one involving state-to-state negotiations and the other involving negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians) to the peace process, as envisaged by the Shamir plan of May 1989, rather than an independent Palestinian solution first, as demanded by the Arab states. Saddam Hussein proved that Israel's fear of unpredictable Arab violence and aggression was a symptom not of paranoia but of realism, and that concessions by Israel which might compromise its strategic po-

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sition would be reckless so long as danger existed from Arab countries like Iraq. (What the administration did not seem to concede was that in removing the Iraqi danger it eliminated, temporarily, only one of Israel's major enemies. Others, like Syria and Libya, are no less implacable and certainly no less dangerous.)

Realizing that peace negotiations between the Arab states and Israel were not yet in the cards, the administration endorsed the idea, favored by Israel, of pursuing incremental confidence-building measures. Indeed, Israel has always believed in "normalization" as the surest way to peace. Thus, although there is no peace treaty with Jordan, Israel has kept the bridges on the Jordan river open. The only people who cannot use them are Israeli Jews. Israeli Arabs and Arab inhabitants of the territories can freely travel in both directions, as can hundreds of thousands of citizens of Arab countries at war with Israel who come to visit friends and relatives. One can even find Saudi patients in Israeli hospitals.

But only Israel has made these gestures. Even Egypt, bound by a formal peace treaty with Israel, has not agreed to normalize relations. Tourism and trade are still mostly a one-way affair. Hundreds of thousands of Israelis have visited Egypt, despite the murders of Israeli diplomats and tourists there, yet the Egyptians allow only a select few to visit Israel. And while Israel buys Egyptian oil and other goods, there is very little trade in the other direction. Nor is there a softening of virulently anti-Israel Egyptian propaganda. As soon as the Gulf War was over, Egypt's government newspaper *Al Ahram* compared Shamir to Saddam Hussein.

In other Arab countries, like Saudi Arabia and Jordan, laws against Jews are more egregious than the Nazi Nuremberg laws. Jews are proscribed from taking up residence in either of these countries, and Jordanian law mandates the death penalty for selling land to Jews, not only in Jordan but in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

But the most harmful of the anti-Israel measures taken by the Arab countries is the boycott. First imposed in 1948, it is yet another living refutation of the thesis that peace depends on a return to the status quo ante 1967. As recently as July 1990, Kuwait and Iraq participated, at the request of the PLO, in an emergency session of the boycott committee in Damascus to expand the boycott to companies involved in Soviet-Jewish immigration to Israel.

The main harm has come not from "primary" boycotts, such as the refusal of all major Japanese companies, including even Japan Air Lines, to deal with Israel, but from secondary effects. Having extraordinary scientific and technological capabilities, Israel could have been a magnet for international venture capital. But large investment companies fear that whatever they might gain by investing in Israel would be more than offset by losses of Arab business. By making investments in Israel and commerce between Israel and the Arab states possible, the removal of the boycott would benefit the whole region. Even more than the signing of peace treaties, it would be a measure most likely to build mutual confidence and attenuate tensions.

IF NOTHING else, the Gulf War should have put the value of treaties in the Middle East into proper perspective. A nonaggression pact between Iraq and Iran did not deter Iraq from launching an eight-year-long bloody war. And Kuwait's friendly relations with Iraq and its munificent support of Iraq's war effort against Iran did not spare it when Saddam Hussein decided to invade. Nor did the fact that both are Arab countries ameliorate the savagery of the occupation. The brutalities of the Kuwait occupation—surpassed only by the barbarism of the internecine fighting in Lebanon—are endemic to the region. They should have been instructive to those who believe accommodating Palestinian demands for a state in the 2,500 square miles of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza will bring stability to the region.

The war should have also taught the world something about the way reality is perceived in the Middle East. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov has told how in the war with Iran, the Iraqis actually believed their own canards about being the invaded rather than the invaders. Similarly, the world watched incredulously as Saddam Hussein convinced himself and other Arabs that he would defeat the coalition armies. So, too, Palestinian Arabs, exposed to as much CNN and other Western reporting as anyone, nevertheless believed that Bush was forced into a cease-fire by Iraqi victories, and that the coalition suffered tens of thousands of casualties. Nothing seems to have changed since 1967, when Palestinians in East Jerusalem, who could see the Jewish part of the city with their own eyes, chose to accept Egyptian reports of Israeli cities going up in flames. The Arabs' ability to be swept by their own propaganda despite the communications revolution does not bode well for their acceptance of Israel's reality.

Now that Saddam has shown that Middle Eastern dreams of grandeur can threaten the economies of the industrial nations, some observers suggest that the concerted efforts of the coalition in war can be translated into an international arms embargo—particularly of nonconventional weapons—on dictatorial regimes in the region. Since the European Community—not to mention the Communist countries—has not only armed every dictatorship in the region with every available weapon system but has embargoed all arms shipments to the only democracy in the area—to the point of refusing to sell children's gas masks to Israel in 1989—the idea seems utopian indeed. And even if all weapon manufacturers, including

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the Soviet Union, China, and North Korea, decided to join such an agreement—a most unlikely scenario—it would be impossible to prevent rich clients from acquiring arms on the world market. Embargoes and restrictions would only make the arms more expensive.

WHAT then can be done to prevent the rise of another Saddam Hussein and bring real hope for peace in the region? The concept of a New World Order in the Middle East was inspired by the anti-Communist revolutions in Eastern Europe, which made *anything* seem possible. And, indeed, the triumph of democratic ideals—which until the 80's were in retreat throughout the world—was breathtaking. But their success would not have been possible without Western encouragement and active support. Neither Walesa nor Havel nor Sakharov could have survived, let alone thrived, without Western insistence on linking political and economic relations to human rights, liberalization, and democratization.

Clearly, the very fact of democratization in Eastern Europe has gone far to remove the danger of war. In the modern era democracies have not attacked each other, nor are they likely to. If the Arab countries become true democracies instead of dictatorships which assume and retain power through violence and brutality, there will be hope for peace.

But will the West condition, say, normalization of relations and economic aid to Syria not only on the release of a few hostages but on real liberalization? Will it insist that Saudi Arabia abandon feudalism? Since the West—still underestimating the dependency of oil producers on Western stability and prosperity—perceives itself a hostage to Arab oil, it may not have the courage to do in the Middle East what it did in Eastern Europe.

Still, in acting as they did in the Gulf, both the American and British governments—and particularly President Bush—surprised the world with their inordinate courage and determination. Perhaps they will now have the courage to realize that seeking a Middle East solution by pressuring Israel to make concessions, instead of by pressing for changes in the Arab world, is like searching for a coin where there is light rather than where it is lost. Such a search may have its moments as the light and shadows play tricks with one's imagination. But it will not produce the coin.

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Russian Politics in the Russian Classics

Jacques Barzun

RECENT literary news from the Soviet Union indicates that a number of interesting—and possibly important—writers are coming out of a long "internal emigration." They were never believers in Communism, but they did not dissent or write for underground circulation. Rather, they cultivated the muse privately, thinking back to the 19th century, its attitudes and achievements.

Those among us who read the Russian novels and plays of that time in translation reserve for them a special place. They are regarded as masterpieces on a par with those of the West, they are praised for their psychological penetration, but they are also felt to belong to an alien and static world. The conventional impression is: when the hero is not doing mad, violent things, he is lying in bed introspecting himself to death; alternatively, the family sits about talking emotional subtleties instead of taking steps to avert disaster. By comparison with the activism found in Balzac, Dickens, George Eliot, Galdós, or Stendhal, Russian characters seem both helpless and complacent about their failure to change the world.

It is easy to guess which Russian novels have given grounds for this conclusion. The truth is that they are few, and even those few contain figures that start out energetic and public-spirited. The rest of the classic works were in fact written to show the need for action and the obstacles to be removed: they are political in the broad sense of criticizing the *polis*—the society—for its defects. If they also show how the best minds and hearts fail to reform it, that too is apt criticism: the stasis is due to public facts and ancestral burdens, not to indolence or complacency.

What has followed the current change of direction in Russia strongly suggests that the obstacles have not changed much; the will is there but something is missing. So a second look at those earlier fictions is instructive, whereas a parallel survey of English or French novels would tell us only about the past: they have won their case, furthered the political evolution. Not so the score of Russian works that we mistake as being exclusively studies of human character in an exotic setting. They convey a social anguish not yet dispelled; the Western reader has justly, but incompletely, admired them.

LIKE the Germans, the Russians call their 19th-century literature classical because it was the first great burst of original work. Actually, that literature was part of the Romantic movement, which throughout Europe tackled the problems of reconstruction after the collapse of the *ancien régime* and the Napoleonic wars. In Russia after 1815, it was known that the Emperor Alexander I had been educated by a French tutor in liberal beliefs. Would he adhere to them and act accordingly?

For an answer we turn naturally to Pushkin (1799-1837) and his great narrative poem known in the West as *Eugene Onegin*—a very different work from Tchaikowsky's opera. In the poem we find a hero evidently characteristic: the young aristocrat who is alive to social and ethical issues, but idle, bored, aware of being useless. He wastes his time in love affairs, duels, and the pointless round of entertainments.

Pushkin coined for him the term Superfluous Man, a name that became quickly popular because it indicated so much in two words. You will ask: is this a political trait? Negatively it is: it defines a political situation and it is the result of a political act. In 1762, when Catherine the Great became Empress, the nobility were no longer compelled to serve in the government. They were set free, as the serfs—the peasants—were to be exactly 100 years later. Eugene Onegin is superfluous, useless, because the regime offers him no political role. He has nothing to do but spend money and kill time. He has not even a public outlet for political discussion, such as a free press.

An important point to note is that Onegin has a counterpart in a young woman, Tatyana, who loves him. He feels or affects indifference. She is a strong character, intelligent, self-respecting. When he discovers his own love for her, she turns him down and marries someone else. She is the living criticism of the Russian male of the 1820's

JACQUES BARZUN, University Professor Emeritus at Columbia, is the author of many books on literature and culture, the most recent of which are *An Essay on French Verse—For Readers of English Poetry* (New Directions) and *Begin Here: The Forgotten Conditions of Teaching and Learning* (Chicago).

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and 30's; we shall meet her kind again in later Russian fiction and on the stage.

A second question raised by Pushkin (this time in "The Bronze Horseman," another story in verse) is that of the social cost of change. Does a survivor of the great flood of 1824 in St. Petersburg have the right to criticize the creation of that city by Peter the Great a century earlier, since it cost so many lives? Pushkin does not answer the question, and it persists: Lenin and Stalin thought *their* plans worth any number of lives, like Peter. The victim in "The Bronze Horseman" is not a nobleman, but a helpless creature representative of the oppressed majority—another fictional type we shall meet more than once.

Shorter poems by Pushkin that criticized serfdom led to his exile and other restraints. Yet the Czar admired, and on one occasion pardoned, him. Repression was not yet terrorist or from the throne; it was bureaucratic. Its temper was shown in the remark of the chief of police when Pushkin died and was mourned as a national poet: "Why so much fuss about somebody who did not even hold an important post?" Classic Russian literature is filled with bureaucrats who hate the aristocrats who hate the system.

Pushkin's contemporary Mikhail Lermontov (1814-41) propelled the Superfluous Man one step further in *A Hero of Our Time*. That new hero, Pechorin, is no longer indolent but angry, vindictive, devious, and violent. He wastes his great abilities in pointless adventures, ruins the women who love him, and ends in self-disgust. In 1825 an aristocrats' revolution had failed. The galling memory of that fiasco contributed to this new, misdirected energy and guilty despair in Lermontov's Superfluous Man.

So far, political ideas are being expressed in poems and stories. They continue to occupy that place down to the Bolshevik Revolution. But from about 1840 there appeared literary magazines, the so-called "thick journals," where poets and novelists first published their works and where critics interpreted in direct terms the literature that was or *seemed* political.

That added phrase—*seemed* political—is necessary because of the peculiar thing that happened to the next great writer, Nikolai Gogol (1809-52). He was a comic satirist. His play, *The Inspector General*, tells the story of the leading people in a small town who hear that an Inspector from the capital is about to arrive. He will examine their doings as mayor, health officer, head of charities, school superintendent, municipal judge, and so on. Since they have all been neglecting their duties, taking bribes, and embezzling public funds, they are nervous. When a young man, Khlestakov, a penniless adventurer, puts up at the hotel, the bureaucrats take him for the Inspector. They tremble, they grovel, they flatter, they lie—and they allow him to borrow 300 rubles from each of them and to make love to the mayor's wife and daughter both. A point worth noting is that Khlestakov is a small, insignificant looking man. It is his presumed rank that counts.

The play is based on a true anecdote that Gogol heard from Pushkin. It is crowded with social types who freely criticize one another. One specimen is accounted for with the remark: "He fell on his head when he was three years old and he's smelled of vodka ever since." The Czar enjoyed the comedy and did not mind its purport, but again the police and the censor scented danger and banned both publication and further performance. The independent critics took it as an attack on the corruption, servility, and ignorance of Russian officialdom.

But the bitterest joke was that Gogol had no intention of being political at all. He was shocked to hear that his work was taken literally, as an attack. To him the play, like his later novel, *Dead Souls*, was first a good funny story and beyond that an allegory of the spiritual life.

In his novel, the "dead souls" are serfs whose recent death has not yet been registered (serfs in Russia were numbered as so many souls). An enterprising low-grade bureaucrat, Chichikov, goes about "buying" these souls from the previous owners for a nominal sum, since it will relieve them of so much taxation. Chichikov then buys cheap land on which to "settle" the dead serfs; he mortgages the place and makes off with the money.

For sophisticated readers, here was a picture of the incompetent state. But Gogol, appalled by reports of his impact on public opinion, underwent a religious crisis, sickened at the thought of his imputed disloyalty, and finally became deranged and died of self-starvation.

By the time we come to the next great writer, Ivan Turgenev (1818-83), the vast reforms of the next Czar, Alexander II, were about to take place. Serfdom would be abolished and various institutions set up to accommodate the change. It had been hastened by the "thick journals." Although most of these were short-lived because of censorship or lack of funds, they kept up a true ferment about political ideas. Chief among them was *The Contemporary*, owned and edited by the poet Nikolai Nekrasov, who published in both serial and book form the leading writers of the generation born around 1820. Turgenev was one of these. Among us he is best known for his novel, *Fathers and Sons*, but he also wrote plays, and one of them, *A Month in the Country*, contains subversive ideas—else it would not have been censored for five years, published in expurgated form, first produced 22 years after it was written, and often misinterpreted till Stanislavsky put it on effectively in 1909.

In the country house that Turgenev depicts,

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dullness prevails. A permanent guest there, Rakitin, is a Superfluous Man who carries on a bloodless love affair with the squire's wife. She is no Tatyana, but a bored, fretful, capricious reader of foreign poems and novels. Into the family comes, as tutor to the younger sister Vera, a crude lower-class fellow named Belaev. He is naive, honest, lively in thought and act. Vera is sweet and lively too; she falls in love with Belaev—and so does the bored wife. In a word, the upstart embodies the energy of life as against the moribund upper class.

Meanwhile, the squire, who is kind enough to his wife, is glad that she is entertained by the listless lover, because he himself cares for nothing but improving his property and supervising the work—another exemplar of energy. When we hear from him, he strikes a significant note. He says:

> The Russian peasant is quite sharp and shrewd and I have great respect for him. Yet there are times when you can talk to him till you're blue in the face explaining something; you think you've made it all clear as can be, but there's no use at all. The Russian peasant lacks—well, he has no love of work. That's what's lacking. "Yes, sir," he says, but he hasn't understood a thing. The German is quite different. . . .

These words contain a double anticipation of political import. One is the root idea of all Tolstoy's attempts at reforming the world, namely, that the peasant, the Russian peasant, is the model human being, the material of the good society. The other foreshadowing is the ambivalent view that Russian writers have of Russia itself. The Russian peasant is sharp and shrewd, but stupid and unwilling to work. He is the great natural resource and the cause of failure.*

The contradictory view of the Russian peasant takes a second political form in the century-long conflict between the Slavophiles and the Westernizers. The Slavophiles say: we need only follow our old traditions; with a few practical reforms we shall do great things; what stands in the way is the poisonous ideas from Western Europe. The Westernizers say: what is strictly Russian is barbarism; it will never change from within; we need the knowledge of the West.

TURGENEV was a Westernizer. He lived most of his life in France, with occasional trips back home, where he divided opinion as to his literary merits and also on this issue of East versus West. His novel, *Smoke*, written five years after the emancipation of the serfs, is less a novel than a sociopolitical argument on this very theme. At one point in it the hero Potughin declares:

> I am tired of hearing about [our] "rough diamonds." People keep talking about the "rich Russian nature," about our superior instinct. . . . Instinct! That's worth bragging about, isn't it? You can take an ant from its ant-hill miles away and it will find its way home, which a man couldn't do. Does that mean that he's inferior to the ant? . . . We keep arguing about the great originality of our art and manufactures. [Some] have even discovered a Russian science and a Russian arithmetic. Two and two are four with us as with everybody else, but "more cleverly." Why, even our most important products—the samovar, the knout, the rope-soled sandal—weren't invented by us. I say that if our little mother Holy Russia were to disappear, not a single nail in the world, not one pinhead would be disturbed.

Elsewhere in the book, Turgenev's own position is defined:

> Yes, I am a Westerner, I am devoted to Europe, or more exactly to civilization, that civilization which is so denigrated among us today. I love it with all my heart. I believe in it. . . . The word civ-il-iz-a-tion is intelligible, immaculate, and sacred, whereas all the others—nation, glory—only smell of blood.

These are words to remember when we come to the politics of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, who keep vacillating on the central question of whether Russia is in Europe or in "the East." Compared with them and the other would-be reformers, Turgenev stands out as the best political mind among the Russian literati of his time. He warned and predicted and his forebodings came to pass. He saw the need to replace the old patriarchal system by the rule of law, and to make bureaucratic suppression and secrecy give way to an open society with free discussion—*glasnost*.

In his greatest work, *Fathers and Sons*, Turgenev shows the turn taken by intellectual conflict after the emancipation of the serfs. From that book has come the term nihilism, which he used to describe the new radicals. They took Westernizing to mean materialistic science and technical training exclusively. In relation to everything else they were nihilists, destroyers, and that did not fit Turgenev's idea of civilization. To him, the narrow technocratic program of these Westernizers was hardly better than the diehard stance of the Slavophiles. For Turgenev himself, the outcome was that he was reviled by both sides.

To sum up, neither instinct, or what might be called the Peasant Principle, nor a materialist ideology, let's call it the Intellect Principle, provided an adequate answer to Russia's predicament. But in retrospect, the two together help to explain

* I cannot resist a digression into the present. In a special issue of the (London) *Financial Times* on Russia last year, the director of a machine-tool factory in Minsk was quoted as saying, "Unemployment is bad, but we have long had hidden unemployment here in the factory—people who had nothing to do and people who did not want to work." The comrade-director's name, by the way, was Eugene Onegin.

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why Communism succeeded first in Russia, contrary to Marx's belief that it would come in a highly industrialized nation. Lenin and his group were scientific materialists and Marx had no use for peasants, but once the kulaks had been massacred in traditional fashion, it was peasant docility that sustained the Soviet regime. It was also "peasant" resistance—the dumb refusal to work which Turgenev described in his play—that ruined the Soviet economy.

At this point it is appropriate to introduce the word *intelligentsia*, a Russian coinage of the same period that refers to an actual class. It came into being there and in no other country at the time. The Russian intelligentsia includes whoever is devoted with high moral fervor to intense, incessant critical thought. Two features set such people apart from ordinary intellectuals: attachment not just to ideas in general, but to an ideology—a system—plus the consciousness of itself that a class must possess to deserve the name.

Members of the intelligentsia came from every layer of society, but they all, necessarily, had some education. Many adhered to Hegel's philosophy of idea generating reality, then considered a revolutionary creed. The number of universities had been much enlarged along with the other reforms of the mid-19th century, and Hegelianism flourished there, at least among the students. With the literary journals and the sociopolitical novels and plays stoking up the zeal for systematic change, the intelligentsia kept making recruits automatically.

Meanwhile, government repression, which came and went in spurts, made the *intelligenty* cohere in their opposition despite disagreements among themselves. One thinks of Voltaire and the *philosophes* in 18th-century France, similarly united while divided. Thus in the space of 30 years since the Superfluous Man, there were now in Russia four classes instead of three—aristocrats and peasants, bureaucrats and *intelligenty*, the latter bent upon some aspect of nihilism, resolved to destroy a large part of the existing state and society.

Since it failed in spite of all the writing and discussing, nihilism came to mean total negation, the apathy of despair, and also the bomb-throwing of the desperate when they happened to be of violent temperament.

An early case of apathetic defection from the intelligentsia is that of Oblomov, the hero in Goncharov's novel of that name. He loses faith, goes to pieces, and takes to his bed. He is too painfully aware of the gap between the ideal in his head and the intractable conditions of Russian society. But first he has gone through much travail: he tries to manage his estate along modern lines, but cannot. He cannot marry the girl he loves and, wholly deprived, cannot accept the commonplaceness of existence. Despite his making these efforts, his is the figure that has created in the West the cliché of the Russian novel as populated entirely by do-nothing characters who talk without end.

I have said that with the intelligentsia Russia had four classes instead of two. Looking at another great writer, Aleksandr Ostrovsky (1823-86), I should perhaps have said four-and-a-half classes. Ostrovsky is accounted the greatest Russian playwright. His works and Shakespeare's have kept the lead in Russian stage productions for 150 years; with us he is virtually unknown. The people he portrays are neither peasants nor nobility nor the *intelligenty* but an ill-defined, ill-at-ease class of merchants and low-grade civil servants. All are just emerged from the peasantry and trying to rise further by their wits—a pathetic and often hateful group with no clear status and no ideology other than getting on.

In Ostrovsky's masterpiece, *The Storm*, we find such a group living in a small town under the patriarchal system, just as if it were the countryside. Old habits, bigotry, prejudice, and petty oppression govern everything. The main character, Dikoy the tradesman, is cynical about it all. He says to his employee: "If I decide to forgive you, I'll forgive you. If I decide to step on you, I'll crush you." Among his less vicious traits is his habit of taking a small coin each week from everybody's pay—who would dare complain? The watchmaker Kuligin, self-taught, has dreams of becoming an engineer. Dikoy shows him his place: "Do you imagine by any chance that we're equals, a couple of pals or something? What important business entitles you to put your snout in my face?"

Dikoy's wife Katerina, a woman of intelligence and sensibility, has an affair with a young man who, unable to rescue her, manages to get sent to Siberia. Katerina's mother-in-law persecutes her till the young woman, unnerved by a thunderstorm, commits suicide. Kuligin sums up: "It's a cruel life, here in our town, real brutal. . . ."

The play was acclaimed from the first, occasionally with curious comments. Some Slavophiles found that the characters as a group had "hidden virtues"—well hidden, I should say. Another critic, eager for realism on the stage, said that this grim play was "a ray of sunshine in the realm of darkness."

On reflection, the play appears as yet another variation on the Superfluous Man, no longer an aristocrat. Neither Boris the lover of Katerina nor Kuligin the aspiring engineer can give effect to their half-baked volitions. It is not alone circumstance and tyranny that hold them back: it is also an inherited flaw, as the author tells us. It seems as though any man who wrestled with his own adversity or with Russia's need of reform proved incapable. Contrariwise, the women—not all, but

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most—had strength and brains, and were ready to act. Their action entailed a sacrifice, but they chose to make it. One concludes that the men, besotted with ideology or crippled by bureaucracy, had never heard of compromise. When rigid rule or ideal solutions fail them, they give up.

The remaining works on the classic list do not refute this conclusion. With Tolstoy (1828-1910), the Superfluous Man assumes several guises. In *Anna Karenina,* Anna's lover Vronsky is a useless member of society and politically a non-being. Anna's husband is a civil servant and colorless. But Levin and his bride find that hard work on the estate is a self-justifying activity—the peasant solution at the landlord level, as in Turgenev's play.

Earlier, in Tolstoy's *War and Peace,* the two principles, Instinct and Intellect, are divided between the hero Pierre and his counterpart Prince Andrey. The latter has a powerful mind, but once Andrey is wounded in war, all his mind can work on in his slow agony is the meaning not of life but of death. Pierre, the prince's equal in rank, is clumsy, ignorant, provincial. But he has a dumb urge to find at least the right view of himself and his social situation. Like the intelligentsia, he wants not so much culture as an ideology. He tries several, including Freemasonry. Finally, he is taught by the peasant Karatayev that to be of use to himself and others, no ideas are any good. What is needed is simplicity and naturalness, in short, the antithesis of Intellect.

Elsewhere in the same tremendous novel, a parallel contrast is embodied in the armed struggle between Napoleon and the head of the Russian army, Kutuzov. Napoleon is a man of ideas, a Westerner reputed a genius. But his ideas have no influence on events, his battle plans are mere wind; whereas Kutuzov, the genius by Instinct—a four-star peasant, so to speak—allows events to take their course. His role is to be simple and natural like Pierre, giving now and then a dumb, obvious response to what happens. He is dumb also in manner, inarticulate, impenetrable to others. Such is the greatness of Russia, the reason for its survival in this vast war with the West.

Tolstoy marred his greatest novel by stuffing into it an untenable and inconsistent theory of history, but in most of his fiction he rightly followed his genius and not his theorizing mind. In *Anna Karenina,* for instance, he plays fair and shows that Levin's efficient working of the estate is boring and lacks moral grandeur. In the story "Confession," it is the peasant who is right, but to make him the basis of a political principle, Tolstoy has to endow the creature with the necessary virtues—patience, generosity, cooperativeness, courage in the face of death. With all that, it is no wonder he has no need of science and philosophy.

As everybody knows, Tolstoy at the end of his life tried to turn these visions into realities on his own estate and in his own life. The attempt brought him alternately to despair and to maniacal efforts, and finally to a flight from home ending in death, not in some peasant shack, but in a railroad station. The West had the last word.

In Tolstoy's somewhat older contemporary, Dostoevsky (1821-81), one finds yet another twist given to the figure of the Superfluous Man and at the same time to the conflict between Instinct and Intellect. The Karamazov brothers represent the various traits split up and redistributed. Dmitri is Instinct. He goes stumbling and bumbling around, a passionate brute who only does harm from impulsiveness and the inability to think for two minutes consecutively. This lands him in court for the murder of his father, which he has not committed, and he is packed off to Siberia with the equally passionate Grushenka. There he may learn to reflect before acting and talking.

Dmitri obviously incarnates the spirit of Russia. He is also the best example of the Discontinuous Man (or Woman), yet another type so frequent and so exasperating in Russian literature—the character who grieves one minute, is terrified the next, and then bursts out laughing wholeheartedly. Is this really spontaneity, as the writers believe, or is it the trait of the mistreated child, the cultural product of arbitrary government, of petty tyranny, which keeps the individual perpetually uncertain about what the all-powerful superior will do next?

Be this as it may, Dmitri is Russia without one powerful element, reserved, as we shall see, for the youngest brother Alyosha. Between the two and sympathetic to both is Ivan, Intellect coupled with a poetic imagination. He is a Westernizer who has read everything and thought it through. The upshot is skepticism, which is crippling. Believing in God, but not in God's world full of horrors—disease, starvation, ignorance, crime, and the suffering of innocent children—Ivan revolts against the universe. As he puts it, he gives back to God his entrance ticket. There is for him no field of action; he is the Superfluous Man bred by the intelligentsia.

Alyosha, the youngest and most lovable of the quartet, is the personification of religious faith in its simplest form. Everybody loves and trusts him without its making him proud. He does good by reflex action; his mere presence is a comfort, and the book ends with him being cheered in a spontaneous cry of "Hurrah for Karamazov!"

Alyosha no more than his brothers can be considered political in any immediate sense; they represent rather the unsatisfactory political material at hand. One concludes that Dostoevsky was teaching the lesson of resignation, even of indifference to the status quo. He seems to say that temperaments are so diverse that the only possible

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reform is self-reform, which improves the world haphazardly and temporarily. This view of what the author implies seems borne out by his political writings, which are mean-spirited and which swing from liberal to reactionary after having begun with revolution. Dostoevsky as a youth narrowly escaped execution and spent some years in Siberia reflecting on God, the individual, and the state.

But this interpretation wears a different meaning when we come to another part of *The Brothers Karamazov*—a chapter which is a masterpiece within the masterpiece. I refer to "The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor." This is a tale written by Ivan, who calls it a poem and who reads it aloud and discusses it with Alyosha—with *him*, because it involves religion. The scene of the story is Spain in the 16th century, where the Grand Inquisitor comes to interrogate a prisoner in his cell. The prisoner is Jesus, who has been caught preaching in the streets of Seville.

What the Inquisitor does is rather to lecture and rebuke his prisoner than to interrogate him, for the main question, insistently repeated, is: why did you come on earth and refuse to give humankind what would make them happy? What the nations want is bread, mystery, miracles, and authority. You had the chance to provide them when Satan tempted you with his three offers. You turned them down. You could have established a universal state guaranteeing peace. Instead you gave a moral law to be followed or not, at one's choice. You gave them Freedom. That was cruel. Men are slaves, though born rebels, and your plan was bound to fail. So it was left to us Inquisitors—some 100,000 of us—to set up a system that supplies the real human needs. We organize everything, ensure its operation by force—all this in your name—and we ourselves are deprived of all happiness. We suffer the knowledge that the whole scheme is a deception, religion a device, mystery and miracles a fraud. Only the bread is genuine, for that is a condition any system must fulfill.

Jesus keeps silent but looks with compassionate eyes at his accuser, who goes on to point out that the regime of Christ—being that of liberty, of choice and error, of sin and penance—breeds crime, war, tyranny, injustice, horror, and despair. These dreadful things have to be put down, or rather, held in check by the Inquisitors, on top of their other, positive obligations. The burden is intolerable. On the one hand, they have an impossible task; on the other hand, they know that their every word and thought is an imposture. It bears down on the best minds and most unselfish spirits, who not only receive no thanks but who are compulsory hypocrites and damned for their good deeds.

The end of the legend is unforgettable. The Grand Inquisitor lets Jesus go free. Before he goes, Jesus kisses the Grand Inquisitor on the lips. Ivan adds one magical sentence about the Inquisitor: "The kiss glows in his heart, but the old man adheres to his idea."

Though Ivan the skeptic is the author of the legend, and the pious Alyosha listens with dismay, the parable offers no guidance to action except the stiffening of state control. Freedom means conflict and injustice, as everybody knew before; but a totalitarian utopia is illusory. As was learned later, it is hell on earth, especially since the Inquisitors are not likely to be Grand—that is, dedicated—but cynical and grasping. And even for them, the system is a perpetual nightmare.

Fortunately or not for the future, we have still one Karamazov brother on our hands, the illegitimate Smerdiakov, son of the old lecher Fyodor Karamazov and the servant Stinking Lizaveta. At first sight, Smerdiakov, a morose epileptic, also seems lacking in political significance; his very name is a portrait and a reproach. But Ivan makes a passing remark worth noting: he calls his bastard brother "material for revolution when the time comes." How so? Smerdiakov is the one who actually murdered the father, and he maintains that Ivan made him do it, though Ivan only taught him that there is no divinely ordained right and wrong. We see here the twisted reasoning of all the Smerdiakovs to come.

Smerdiakov had been sent to the capital to train as a cook. He comes back a kind of lower-middle-class dandy, who reads books, hates women, envies the rich, and, with contempt for all, thinks himself everybody's equal. In short, he is the new half-educated and fully conceited common man. Like his father Fyodor, he says: "How I hate Russia!"

Smerdiakov comes to a bad end, but I have never believed in it. In a sudden turnabout he hangs himself, a would-be Judas figure. Dostoevsky gives no reason for Smerdiakov's change of heart, which presupposes revulsion against Ivan's ideas. Smerdiakov seems to commit suicide for Dostoevsky's convenience. It is a pity he dies: he had over his literary ancestors in Gogol and Ostrovsky the advantage of being an atheist; he might have made an excellent commissar.

Dostoevsky gets rid of Smerdiakov before he does more harm, but the wretch has left a descendant in the work of a later writer named Fyodor Sologub (1863-1927). He is not widely known in the West, though his novel, *The Petty Demon*, has been translated. It is a wonderful book. The title gives an inkling of what is in it: the petty demon is Peredonov, a provincial schoolteacher, who comes into relation with some 35 other characters—too large a cast to permit a summary of the tale. Suffice it to say that Peredonov is the quintessence of egotism, philistinism, brutality, fear of ridicule, gluttony, and finally paranoia. His acts and opinions contain all that literature can tell about Russia at the turn

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of the century. To take a single glimpse into his soul, Peredonov, always guarding his status, gets furious when at a dinner he is not given a fresh jar with better jam than a lower-ranking guest. Barely retold in this way, the incident sounds trifling; in context, it causes a shudder of horror.

Indeed, the account of this seething, closed-in society is almost more than one can stand, except for the contrasting story of the tender, touching love between an older woman and a young boy.

We have now reached the last name on the roster: Chekhov (1860-1904). In his fiction the narrative is so delicately managed that many critics have said the author merely portrays; he holds no views about current misgovernment and no hope of reform. That may be true as to Chekhov's intention, but not as to his effect. Granted that in the plays lifelikeness requires equilibrium; everybody in turn must be seen as being right. So I pass by the plays, although I think close attention would show certain biases that would turn out to be political.

But the best short stories are certainly explicit. Take "The Man in a Case," where a village teacher is represented as boxed up—in a case—by his training and his petty soul:

> The only things clear to him were government circulars in which something was forbidden. There was always something doubtful, vague, not fully clear in any permission. When a teashop was licensed in town, he would say, "It's all right, very nice, of course, but I hope it won't *lead to anything*." People late at church, a schoolboy prank, a woman teacher out with an officer—well, he hoped "*nothing would come of it.*"

For comic effect Chekhov has this Byelikov encased physically, too—overcoat, scarf, galoshes, umbrella even in fair weather and on warm days. He almost gets married to a girl who laughs all the time and sings Russian folksongs. It is once more the feckless man and the woman with peasant instincts embodying the life-force. Half-engaged, Byelikov keeps going around town buttonholing everyone he meets. "Marriage," he says, "is a serious step." And he adds: "One may find oneself in an unpleasant position."

A significant fact is that Byelikov is universally respected. He may act like a fool, but he is after all an appointed official. Only the girl's brother, something of a brute, despises him as well as the other teachers. "You are nothing but government clerks." Then some prankster puts up a caricature entitled "Byelikov in love." His fiancée laughs as usual; he is shattered, takes to his bed, and dies.

Byelikov seems an anthology of all previous Russian heroes other than the two or three endowed with great gifts. The rest are governed by routine, petty-minded in bureaucrat fashion, bewildered by ideas from outside, gabbling promiscuously about their troubles, and when aware of ineffectuality, ready to die, preferably in bed. Surely, a writer who presents such a character does not remain impartial in the face of the social reality he has reconstructed. Chekhov is not simply saying: "Look and enjoy."

Another story of his confirms the point in so many words. Called "A Dreary Story," it is in the form of an old man's diary, the old man being a doctor, like Chekhov himself. Much adulated in his retirement, this man of science feels oppressed by his visitors; they are dull and he knows they have no idea of what he is like. They only respect his title. Having no one to talk to, he reads a great deal and this is his opinion:

> With the exception of two or three of our older writers, all our literature today strikes me as not being literature so much as a sort of home industry that exists solely to be kept going. I don't say the French books [are better]. They don't satisfy me either, but they are not so tedious as the Russian, and it is not rare to find in them the requisite of artistic creation—the *feeling of personal freedom*—which is lacking in the Russian authors.

THERE you have it. The wheel has come full circle. Pushkin's Superfluous Men were stifled for lack of freedom to act in the public arena. After Pushkin, ranging up and down the social scale in books, we have seen nothing but pitiful attempts to break out of the patriarchy. When somebody gets out, like Ivan, it is at the cost of something essential, faith of some sort, public hope. Not finding it, Ivan goes half mad. The other, weaker natures suffer tyranny like dumb animals or turn fierce and inflict it on the rest, nihilist destroyers of their surroundings. The choice is: to be a bully like Dikoy or a government clerk like Byelikov.

And so the debate about Russian reform, by Instinct or by Intellect, by the peasant or the Westernizer, goes 'round and 'round with no exit in political action for lack of political institutions. To its most gifted observers Russia remains holy and great, but it is landlocked in spirit and social forms just as it is in geography. Readers of its classic novels and plays are bound to ask, will the age of Gorbachev find a break through the ancestral barrier?

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Freddy and Me

A Story

Ellen Sussman

I'M LIVING at my brother's house for a few weeks, just till I decide where I'm going next, and Jeffrey and Reba have fixed me up with a blind date. Alex is one of the other associates in Jeff's law firm. He's too tall, his hair's too short, but he's got a look. And I'm looking. He says, "So was Jeff the protective older brother when you were kids?" I say, "You gotta hear about Freddy Martin. Jeff almost murdered me for making it with a black kid."

Then it dawns on me: he'd still kill me. The idea of my telling this story has him contemplating my brutal demise. My brother was not a fighter when he was a kid, but he fought with Freddy Martin. He's now thirty-three, and if Freddy Martin appeared at his doorstep, fifteen years since the last time we saw him, my brother's hands would curl into fists. Only two people could get my brother riled up, Freddy Martin and me.

And so I kick into gear; I may even tell the whole damn story. He's such a gentleman, my brother, that all he says is, "Do you really want to tell this story?"

"Yeah, I do," I say. "I think we should play a game. I'll tell the story, then everyone should try to guess where Freddy Martin is today. I'm in on the game, because I don't have any idea where the kid is. The one with the best answer doesn't have to do the dishes."

"You don't have to do the dishes," Reba says. "You're my guests." We're sitting at their dining-room table, finishing dinner. Reba turns the lights on even though candles are burning on the table.

"The winner gets breakfast in bed tomorrow," I say and offer my date a half-smile. He's not bad. He might stay, but I haven't decided yet. Besides, he'd be my first Jew.

"OK," I begin. "Jeffrey and I started at the Millstone Day School the same year that Freddy Martin did. The year after the riots in the city—'67, '68? I was in seventh grade, Jeff and Freddy were in eighth grade."

"I thought you were much younger than Jeff," Alex says. Sweet man.

"No, Jeff's been middle-aged since he was fifteen," I explain. Reba laughs, looks at Jeff, stops laughing.

"Anyway," I tell them, "Freddy Martin was the first black at Millstone Day School and we were the first Jews. Freddy Martin's mother must have wanted her kid away from the racial riots as badly as our mom did. So they shipped us all off to lily-white Millstone.

"Freddy Martin was on our bus, but I don't think we talked to him much—he was eying us as the enemy right from the beginning. He was a smart kid, had it all figured out, the way to the top, and messing around with Jews wasn't going to help him any.

"As soon as he gets a handle on the way the Millstone preppies dress, he appears sporting chinos and Lacoste shirts and penny loafers. He gets his Afro cut real short, close to his head, and carries a goddamn book bag. I mean, there's a black revolution going on down the street and this kid's carrying a book bag."

"I didn't see you wearing a Jewish star around your neck," Jeffrey says.

I look at him. "That's got nothing to do with anything. I never told anyone I wasn't Jewish."

"Take it easy," he says. "I was just making a comment."

"You want to make a comment," I tell him, "make your comment. Don't slip in any sly remarks."

"Right," he says. "Everyone want dessert?"

"I don't get it," Alex says. "I thought you said you made it with this guy, Freddy Martin."

"I did," I say. "If anyone would let me tell my story, I'd tell my story."

"Tell your story," Reba says. "They always do this," she explains to Alex. "Brothers and sisters, you know."

"That certainly explains everything," I tell her.

"I'd love dessert, Reba," Jeffrey says.

"And I'd love to see you and Freddy Martin going for blood again," I say.

"You liked that, huh."

"I dream about it," I tell him. "My prince of a brother rolling around in the dirt with a black kid."

"You're kidding," Reba says.

"She's kidding," Jeffrey says calmly, but I know he's not calm anymore. Everyone else might think

ELLEN SUSSMAN, a new contributor, is a writer now living in Paris. Her stories have appeared in *Redbook*, the *Bennington Review*, the *New Boston Review*, and *Story Quarterly*.

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so, but I see the tightening in his jaw, the pressure of his hands on the table. "We were on the gym floor."

"Who won?" Alex asks.

"I made my point," Jeffrey tells him.

"Which was?" Alex asks. "I've missed a couple of beats here."

"He called me a kike," Jeffrey says quietly.

Reba gasps, as if she's never heard the word before. I need patience with Reba. She's been dropped on our planet from outer space, I figure, and it's taking her a while to adjust.

"Don't worry," I tell her. "Your knight-in-shining-armor came to the rescue of the entire race."

"I popped him one," Jeffrey said. "That's all. And that's enough, Lennie."

"Good for you," Alex says. "What were you doing while this was going on?" he asks me.

"I was checking out the guy's legs," I tell him. "They were wearing shorts—it was during gym class—and I just couldn't help noticing while they were rolling around pummeling each other that I had never seen such hot legs."

"She's kidding," Reba tells Alex.

He smiles at me.

"I was reciting Jewish prayers," I try again.

"Another joke," Reba offers.

"Thanks, Reba," I tell her. "This guy would get the wrong impression of me if it weren't for you. Remind me to bring you along on all my first dates."

"Maybe then you wouldn't have so many," Jeffrey says.

"Oh, a blow from the left. The Jewish Stallion strikes again. OK. Back in your corner now. Round One's over."

"That's not nice," Reba says. "He was kidding, Lennie."

"I know, Reba," I tell her. "I know my brother."

"I'll get dessert," she offers.

"Good idea," I say, "I'm building up an appetite."

"Can we skip to the sex part?" Alex asks.

"I like him," I tell Jeffrey. "How'd you know he was my kind of guy?"

"I know my sister," Jeffrey says sweetly.

"Sex," I say. "Raw, unadulterated sex. Reba, you're not getting the dessert."

"I'm going," she says and bustles out of there. Five bucks she presses her ear to the keyhole.

"I was at a party one night, a Millstone party."

"Lennie got invited to those, Jew though she may be," Jeffrey cuts in.

"He's jealous," I explain. "Never did fit in. He was the smartest kid in the school, but never made it to one party, never made it with one *shiksa*."

"My choice, Lennie."

"Right. Right. You chose to be miserable."

"I wasn't miserable. The school was miserable. Anti-Semitism is miserable."

"I'm Jewish. I had a good time."

"So did all your boyfriends."

"What the hell's that supposed to mean?"

"It means you tried too hard. You gave up too much."

"I didn't give up a damn thing. You gave up being a teenager. For the sake of making some point about being Jewish." I get up from the table. The room's hot, the table's a mess, and I want to get out of there. "Can't we go sit outside? I mean, why the hell do you live in suburbia if you never even go out in your back yard?"

Alex stands up. He's smiling. "Let's go outside," he says. "Just tell me one thing. Did your mother survive this?"

"Me?" I ask. "I'm easy. Anyone can survive me. He's the tough one. No one's figured that out yet. Mom used to say how he'd sit calmly in his playpen all day while I ravaged the house. Now what do you think he was doing in that playpen? He was planning. For thirty-three years he's been planning. And he's almost ready."

"For what?" Reba asks. She's suddenly next to him. I knew she wouldn't miss a word.

"For what?" Alex repeats when I don't answer.

"Revenge," I tell them.

"On the anti-Semites of the world?" Alex asks. He's quick, but not quick enough.

"On me," I tell him.

Jeffrey smiles, really smiles. "I don't know why everyone always thought you were dumb," he says.

"Jeffrey," Reba admonishes.

"It's because I was always having such a good time," I explain. "Follow me outside and I'll show you a good time."

Alex follows. Reba keeps Jeffrey inside for a few minutes, and through the glass sliding door I can see them talking to each other, earnestly. Alex and I sit side by side in lounge chairs, looking out over the huge expanse of lawn. It is a neat lawn, manicured, and very green, well-lit by the floodlights Reba has shone upon us. I can smell lilacs though I cannot see them.

"Do you live like this?" I ask Alex.

"Like what?"

"Like this. Do you have lounge chairs in your back yard."

"I have lounge chairs in my back yard. And you?"

"I don't have a back yard. I don't have a front yard. I don't have anything between a front yard and a back yard."

"Where were you living before you came here?" he asks me. He also pours me more wine.

"In Boston. With some guy."

"Where's the guy?"

"In Boston. With some guy."

"You won't stay here long," Alex says.

"I know. I think I'll head down South. Louisiana."

"They don't like Jews in Louisiana."

"I'm not sure I like Jews in Louisiana. I don't

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think my whole life should be dictated by who likes Jews and who doesn't like Jews."

"Forget I said anything. I'll leave that argument to your brother."

"Tell me something," I say. "Are the lawyers in your firm all Jewish?"

"Most of them."

"How about this neighborhood. Most of these folks are Jewish?"

"Probably," Alex says.

"Why?" I ask him. "Why do you all live like this?"

He waits for a moment, and I hear the dim sound of neighbors' voices. "So we're not so alone, I guess," he finally says.

Now, in the silence, I can hear a baby's cries from the house next door.

"Do you work?" Alex asks me, and the baby quiets down.

"I work," I tell him. "I get a job wherever I go. I waited tables in Boston. I was a bicycle messenger before that. It's not hard to get a job."

"Or a guy."

"Or a guy." I look at him. He's been looking at me; I know that even though I've been eying the march of the killer ants along the terrace. "Do you want to stay tonight?" I offer. "We can sleep out here. Roll around on Jeffrey's perfect lawn. How's that sound?"

"I'm not sure," he says, still looking at me. I can't read the look.

"About which part?" I ask. "The lawn part or the staying part?"

"About you," he says. "I'm not sure about you."

"Good," I tell him. "It's better that way."

"Watermelon," Reba announces and appears, bearing fruit.

Alex and I smile at each other. He'll stay, I decide. "More wine please," I ask, and he fills our glasses.

"Is it safe to come out?" Jeffrey calls from inside the house.

"It's never safe," I warn.

"I should know that," he says, passing through the sliding door and taking the lounge chair next to Alex. "I lived in the same house with her for seventeen years."

"Was she always like this?" Alex asks.

"Like what?" I ask.

"I'm not sure," he says.

"She had to win every game she played," my brother tells him.

"And did she?" he asks.

"Of course," Jeffrey says. "She was diabolical at birthday parties. She went home with all the prizes."

"I was just trying to keep up with you," I tell him.

"I was never any good at games," Jeffrey says.

"You were good at everything," I remind him. "You could do no wrong."

"You used to think that," Jeffrey says softly. I don't look at him, but I know he is leaning forward, toward me. "You used to think I was a pretty good older brother."

"I remember one day watching you shoot hoops in the back yard," I tell them, and I find myself peering into this yard as if it's the same place, the same time. "It was late summer, maybe September, because the lightning bugs were out. I remember hearing a voice inside my head chanting, 'Miss it, miss it, miss it,' every time you threw the ball toward the basket. It was like it was someone else's mean voice, but I heard it, and I thought, 'That's me, that what I want.' And right on cue, there was Dad, standing at the barbecue, flipping burgers, proclaiming, 'He doesn't miss, does he?'"

"If he's so good," Alex says loudly, "why does the firm basketball team have a losing record?"

"We're just a bunch of short Jewish guys," Jeffrey jokes.

"Your sister wants to talk to you about that," Alex offers.

"No," I tell them. "I want to talk about Freddy Martin."

"I thought we left Freddy Martin behind a long time ago," Reba says.

"No one leaves Freddy Martin behind," I explain. "Freddy Martin's always ahead. He's ahead of everyone else."

"Like you?" Jeffrey asks.

I don't answer. I choose a piece of watermelon from the tray. "Can I spit seeds?" I ask.

"No, Lennie," Jeffrey says, exasperated. "Grow up, will you?"

I laugh, though no one else is laughing. Alex is forking his watermelon.

"So I'm at this party," I tell them, and I ignore Jeffrey's moan. "All the hot-shots are there, the guys I'm dying to love. They have this terrific sand-colored hair that always falls in their eyes. They have holes in the elbows of their crew-neck sweaters, and their jeans follow the curve of their small butts."

"Spare us, Lennie," Jeffrey says.

"This is key," I insist. "This is everything."

"Their butts?" Alex asks.

"Freddy Martin, in his cool clothes, does not have a small butt. Blacks do not have small butts. Jews do not have small butts. This, I'm afraid, is a fact of life."

"She's done a survey," Jeffrey explains.

"I'm not arguing," Alex says. "And I'm not going to walk in front of her."

"Maybe she's grown up," Jeffrey says. "Maybe minimum butt width isn't right up there on her list of date qualifications anymore."

"You never know what I'm measuring," I tell them.

"Lennie!" Reba shouts.

"Joke, Reba," I explain.

"I don't care," Reba says. "I'm not sure you're funny."

"Neither am I, Reba," I tell her.

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We're all quiet for a moment, and I hear mosquitoes being zapped by Jeffrey's electronic bug lantern looming at the edge of the patio.

"The kids start playing spin the bottle," I tell them. "We're all fifteen and sixteen, so this isn't the dry-peck version of the game. We're stoned. Some kid's parents are away for the weekend, and couples are making out in every dark corner of the Millstone mansion. Now's my chance. I've made it to a Millstone party, but I haven't yet made it with a Millstone guy. When I set that bottle spinning, my mind's cloudy, I can hardly breathe because I'm suddenly in the middle of one of their games, about to find myself in the middle of one of their embraces, and the bottle points to Freddy Martin. There's a hush when the bottle stops. The Jew and the black, the hush seems to say. Freddy Martin almost says something, but stops. My breath is caught in my throat. Some kid finally calls out, 'She's all yours, Freddy.' No one else is moving, but Freddy Martin gets up, walks around the circle and holds out his hand. He's hating me with every inch of his body; I see it in his eyes, in his tight smile, I hear it when he says, 'Let's teach these Millstone kids about making love.' He pulls me up, his grip too hard on my hand, and kisses me right there in front of everyone. His kiss is a dare; I know it—I feel the point of his tongue in my mouth. The Millstone boys start hooting and everyone's laughing. When I pull my mouth away, hoping for air, I see his eyes watching mine. 'OK,' I tell him, my voice loud enough for the others to hear, my eyes returning his glare. 'Let's go.' I march off toward the stairs, toward the bedrooms, where no one has gone, no one's that serious about this game, we're virgins, we're kids after all, but Freddy Martin follows me. We don't speak to each other, there's nothing we can say, but on some little sister's dotted swiss bedspread, with her stuffed animals pushed to the floor, we do it. We never talked to each other after that night. We didn't need to. I had Millstone boyfriends, he had Millstone girlfriends. We hardly even looked at each other again."

When no one says anything for a while, I say, "Would you get rid of that bug zapper, Jeffrey? It's like listening to a war going on."

Jeffrey walks over to the hanging lamp, turns off the switch. "We'll get bitten," he says quietly.

"Big fucking deal," I tell him.

"Please, Lennie," Reba says.

"I'll play your game," Jeffrey says suddenly. He stands behind us on the patio, and we can't see him; we can only hear his voice. No one turns around. "Do you know where Freddy Martin is today?"

"On his way to the White House," I say.

"Wrong," Jeffrey says.

"Married to a debutante," Reba says.

Our voices are low and serious.

"Wrong," Jeffrey says.

"He's a new associate in our law firm," Alex says.

"Wrong," Jeffrey says. "He's a bum. He's sleeping on some street corner with someone's overcoat under his head. He's piss-eyed drunk, and the mosquitoes are eating his toes."

The baby next door is crying again. The screams are high-pitched and wild, like a cat's.

"Reba," I say, sitting up, "can I do the dishes?"

"No, don't be silly. That's my job."

"I want to do them," I tell her. "My hands are cold."

She shrugs her shoulders. "I'm going to get sweaters for the men," she says.

In the kitchen, I turn on the faucet and let the hot water run for a long time. I hold my hands under the tap until they are numb. I don't turn around when I hear the sliding door open and close.

"I'm going home," I can hear Alex say from somewhere behind me. "I'll call you tomorrow. OK?"

I nod my head, but I don't turn around. I keep working on the dishes.

It seems like hours later when I hear my brother clearing his throat behind me. He doesn't want to scare me.

"I thought you had gone to sleep," I say, looking at him quickly, then back at my hands in the sink. I have stopped thinking, and I am simply standing there soaking my hands. Maybe I had too much to drink. Most of the dishes are done, but somehow I got stuck standing there with my hands in the sink.

"I couldn't," he says. "I'm a lousy sleeper. And Reba snores."

"That's impossible," I say, laughing.

"Don't tell her I told you," he says.

I nod, not looking at him.

"Will you come sit down?" he asks. "Either that or I'll send you our water bill this month."

Again I laugh. "It feels good," I explain, though that doesn't explain anything.

"Please, Lennie," Jeffrey says. "Come sit with me."

It would be so easy, I realize suddenly, to sit down with my brother, to let him be as good and kind to me as he is to everyone else in the world. It would be so easy, I realize, moving my hands slowly underwater like two odd fish I've never seen before, to tell him I like his friend Alex. But, despite my tired legs and my waterlogged fingers, I say, "I'm going to sleep outside tonight. On the lawn."

"You can't do that," Jeffrey says sensibly.

So of course I answer that I can and I will. I'll sleep there alone.

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Books in Review

His Father's Son

PATRIMONY: A TRUE STORY. By PHILIP ROTH. *Simon & Schuster. 238 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by NEAL KOZODOY

THERE once was a well-known New York intellectual desperate to place his father in one of the old-age homes built and maintained by the city's Jewish community. With this man, who happened to call me one day for advice, it had long been a point of pride never to have sustained any connection of his own with organized Jewish life, and although educated about everything else in the world, he had conspicuously declined to educate himself about its culture, its traditions, or its modes of self-perpetuation. None of which had stopped him, however, from writing whole books sentimentally celebrating the supposed "integrity" of the Jews when they were poor and victimized, and attacking their "degradation" as soon as they became associated with the striving American middle class. To complete the anecdote it is only pertinent to add that, largely on the strength of his reputation as an eminent Jewish intellectual, the same middle-class community whose works he contemned and had ever disdained to support quickly found a place for his father in one of its oversubscribed institutions; and that he has gone on denouncing it to this very day.

A commonplace enough occurrence. And yet there were also other, mitigating elements in this little episode which ought not to be overlooked, and which along with much else happen to link its protagonist to the author of *Patrimony*. Conspicuous among them was the tone, at once intimate and pugnacious, in which my caller spoke to me, quite unforgettably, about his worries for his failing father. In him as here in Philip Roth, a long-standing and fiercely embraced sense of filial obligation seemed to have grown out of, to be inseparable from, some shared memory of injury. Exactly whose injury, it was hard to say—the father's, who in order to secure the son's advancement had endured endless humiliations and sacrifice, or the son's, who in redeeming the sacrifice, by fulfilling his father's thwarted ambitions, had somehow necessarily also repudiated his existence. In any event the consequence, again as in Roth, was to overlay an already thick mix of feelings with a belligerent, almost resentful, piety. What was unusual was hardly the belligerence; it was the intimacy, plus the child's assumption toward his parent of an automatic, reflexive, virtually parental protectiveness.

Patrimony, subtitled "A True Story," throws up a monument, intimate and protective in just this way, to the "integrity" my caller had associated with impoverished Jews of the older generation. The integrity of Philip Roth's father Herman, alive and kicking at eighty-six when the book opens, dead at eighty-eight when it closes, is of several kinds, starting with the conventional. Forthright and stubbornly decent, Herman Roth, a Newark insurance salesman, worked his way up from poverty to win, in time, a modest managerial position with Metropolitan Life; to raise a family and give it "a secure, if simple, home life"; to bury relatives and, in 1981, a wife; and in general to push himself by sheer dynamic willpower "through the obstacle course just about everything had been." Integrity extended to the structure of his personality as well, revealed to us in these pages as disciplined, self-reliant, almost rabidly devoted, but also (and this is no contradiction) unreasonable, wildly irascible, full of the self-righteous rage never entirely foreign to dogmatic men with lifelong habits of renunciation and the illusion of indispensability. And there was a simple integrity, too, in his purposes as a man and as a Jew; these amounted, in his son's words, to the pursuit of a single aim: "survivorship, survivorhood, survivalism."

A fair part of Herman Roth's struggle in life is told by his son in *Patrimony*, along with the story of his struggle to survive the brain tumor that would kill him. Over the course of this strenuous narrative we come to hear not only from a very noisy Herman Roth and his immediate family and friends but also from the proliferating personnel who typically attend a modern death-watch: doctors and surgeons, hospital staff, administrators and "inmates" of senior-citizen condominiums, other assorted neighbors, bystanders, interested parties. Among those parties, their crucial services taken for granted by the disaffiliated Roth just as they were by my ungrateful petitioner, are an old-age home run by the Jewish Federation of New Jersey, a YMHA, a synagogue and its rabbi. In form, but only in form, the book soon comes to resemble a cross between an oral history and one of those diagnosis-by-diagnosis, operation-by-operation guides to terminal illness in which the sufferings and example of the late departed end up vying for commemoration, often unsuccessfully, with the trauma and heroism of the attending child/lover/friend/confidant/helpmeet.

Philip Roth, however, is a novelist; and for better or worse *Patrimony* shows it. Exquisitely paced and plotted, the book envelops, almost strangles, the reader in story, character, scene; Herman Roth himself, voluble, charming, overbearing, original, may be his son's most convincing imaginative creation in a long career. Novelistic, too, are the incidental touches

NEAL KOZODOY *is the editor of* COMMENTARY.

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which in the characteristic Roth manner give shape and symbolic resonance to this "True Story," even as they unavoidably raise questions about its trustworthiness as reportage.

Thus, Philip Roth, meditating on the skein of familial aggression, dependence, and identification as he heads off to his father's hospital bedside, lands in the cab of a direct-from-central-casting New York psychopath who, divulging quickly his own family attitude ("My old man's in his grave now without his four front teeth. I knocked 'em out of his fucking mouth for him"), triggers in his backseat passenger some apposite comparative analysis ("When *we* [emphasis added] lay waste, when we efface, it isn't with raging fists . . . but with our words, our brains, with mentality . . ."). At a later moment, in his father's apartment and through his father's mediation, Philip Roth meets a survivor of the Holocaust who has a manuscript to peddle about his wartime exploits; it turns out to be the sheerest pornography. "Lurid exhibitionist" is the term applied to this character in *Patrimony*; about him, the author of *Portnoy's Complaint* quotes himself saying to his father, "'He makes me look like a piker.'" Is either of these two opportune survivors, these two perfectly placed alter egos, real, did they "happen"? Or have we stumbled by inadvertence into one of those halls of mirrors (*Deception, The Counterlife*) in which Philip Roth has recently played his brilliant, tiresome tricks with the fictional representation of reality?

"You must not forget anything" is the motto of this book, its *leitmotif*: "I must . . . remember everything accurately, so that when he is gone I can re-create the father who created me." Whether accurate or fictionalized, inclusive or tendentiously selective, in its display of memory *Patrimony* can be methodical to the point of cruelty. Roth's father is himself an obsessive rememberer: of neighborhood sites and the stories that go with them, of family history, of names and places, of slights and injuries, of (his son's) accomplishments. And the son too is after all a famous retriever of the past, here summoning with microscopic care both his father's life and his own pervasive role in that life and its final agony. In probably the most merciless scene in this book Philip Roth recounts in detail how, in the small upstairs bathroom of his Connecticut house, he cleans up the mess made when his father helplessly, monumentally, befouls himself and everything—floor, sink, tub, bathmat, towels, clothing, fixtures—around him. The son gets the poor broken old man washed and into bed.

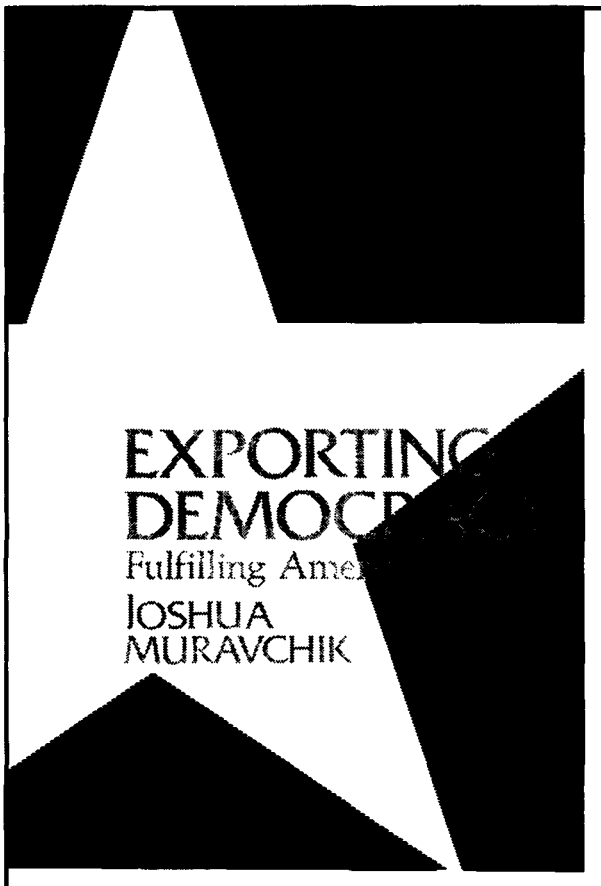
"Don't tell the children," he said, looking up at me from the bed with his one sighted eye.

"I won't tell anyone," I said. "I'll say you're taking a rest."

"Don't tell [Roth's wife] Claire [Bloom]."

"Nobody," I said.

No sooner promised than betrayed. But of course within the scheme of *Patrimony* the betrayal, no sooner perpetrated than silently admitted, sports an excusing novelistic purpose; it points the way to a moral. What does a man whose life has been defined by survivorship, survivorhood, survivalism pass on to his surviving son? We learn early in this book that Philip Roth, financially secure and childless, has ceded to his elder brother his own share in their prospective inheritance from Herman Roth's savings and insurance policies. But then, feeling obscurely cheated—"it was what he had to give me, it was what he had wanted to give me, it was due me by custom and tradition"—he temporarily fixates on a shaving mug which had belonged to his grandfather; this pathetic object of sentiment his father gives to him, wrapped up in brown paper bags "savagely twisted together" and bearing the message in Magic



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Marker, "From a Father to His Son."

Finally there are his father's tefillin. At the end of his life Herman Roth, never a religious observer, has suddenly begun to attend synagogue, out of (his son says) the usual complex of motives—consolation, a familiar environment, "the communion with his own mother and father he told me he felt there." Though he does not wear them, the one tangible aspect of his Judaism are the leather phylacteries donned at weekday morning prayers by observant Jews. These, "neatly stored for years and years in a velvet bag in a drawer of the dining-room breakfront in the apartment where we had grown up," the spiritually stymied old man ends up depositing furtively in an empty locker at the YMHA where he hangs out regularly with Jews his age. And once again the son, when he learns of it, feels a little plundered of his patrimony: "I wouldn't have prayed with them, but I might well have cherished them, especially after his death."

Yet now, standing in the bathroom at the scene of his father's gruesome mishap, he is compensated by a revelation:

> You clean up your father's shit because it has to be cleaned up, but in the aftermath of cleaning it up, everything that's there to feel is felt as it never was before. . . . And *why* this was right and as it should be couldn't have been plainer to me, now that the job was done. So *that* was the patrimony. And not because cleaning it up was symbolic of something else but because it wasn't, because it was nothing less or more than the lived reality that it was.
>
> There was my patrimony: not the money, not the tefillin, not the shaving mug, but the shit.

An unmistakable note of preening hovers in this passage, but that only marks it as genuine Philip Roth—that, and the cloacal vision of what constitutes "lived reality." Still, no one would apply to this artist for heart, let alone exaltation; from practically his first published word his hawk eye has been resolved, one way or another, downward. (In his bathroom ruminations he boasts, a little lamely, "once you sidestep disgust and ignore nausea and plunge past those phobias that are fortified like taboos, there's an awful lot of life to cherish.") All that aside, however, what strikes one about this passage is something else, something reminiscent of other second-generation American Jewish sons guarding their last filial obligations with a jealous defiance ("because you have to"), clinging to duty like an atonement.

For what? The gift, the "patrimony," is arresting enough in itself to consider again the one other bequest—not the money, and not the shaving mug—which by father and son alike has been rendered forfeit. To hear his aestheticizing son tell it, what the befuddled Herman Roth does in stowing his tefillin in a locker at the Y is an act that partakes of the artistic, no less, the expression of a wildly original imagination, "inspired by a personalized symbolic mythology as eccentric as Beckett's or Gogol's." Unsubmitted to inspection by this notoriously fearless explorer of human waywardness is the palpable bafflement of a man who at the end of his days opens the drawer in which his own patrimony has lain willfully secreted, only to discover that in a lifetime consecrated to survivorship he has succeeded in rendering it untransmissible, unwantable. "He probably thought I would have scoffed at the very idea of his handing on his tefillin to me," reports his loyal, truthful, bereft son—"and forty years earlier he would have been right."

"It [Judaism] all dribbled away, as you were passing it on," wrote an enraged Franz Kafka to the father named Herman in *his* life; and out of fury and protest, he proceeded as he proceeded to reclaim what he reclaimed of his own proper inheritance. "Do me a favor, my suffering people, and stick your suffering heritage up your suffering ass," rants, by contrast, Alexander Portnoy. Filially devoted to the last, his creator (like that long-ago caller of mine) now stands forth with his patrimony in his hands, cleaning it up as he must, futilely protecting it with art.

An American Century?

THE FIRST UNIVERSAL NATION. By BEN J. WATTENBERG. *The Free Press. 418 pp. $22.95.*

Reviewed by LOUIS WINNICK

SEVERAL years ago Irving Kristol promulgated the "Yes, but" principle of American journalism. The credo of contemporary journalists, wrote Kristol, is that all official reports are suspect, and that upbeat reports are twice suspect. Therefore, in the unlikely circumstance that a good-news story leads the network evening news—say, a government report of a drop in the national unemployment rate—joy will be instantly darkened by a second lead, "but joblessness in the Rust Belt remains at record levels," and the broadcast will likely conclude with a sequence depicting unemployment lines in Rockport or Dearborn.

For 20 years or more, it has been Ben Wattenberg's journalistic vocation to turn Kristol's "Yes, but" rule on its head. Let some bad-news tale capture the headlines, say of rising poverty or failing education, of environmental damnation or American decline, and one can count on Wattenberg, statistics in hand, to blow away the false or misleading inference. Are high-school dropout rates excessive? Yes, but they happen, read my tables, to be the lowest in history. Is there a record number of blacks in prison? Yes, but simultaneously there are record numbers of blacks in college, in fact nearly ten times as many. Are foul air and soil worrisome health hazards? Yes, but life expectancy keeps advancing and age-adjusted morbidity keeps falling. Has Japan, Inc. become the world's number-one industrial country? Yes, but a plummeting birth rate and insurmountable barriers to immigration will ultimately devitalize its labor force. And wait until Japan's next generation aggressively demands public re-

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LOUIS WINNICK *is the author of a recent book on immigration,* New People in Old Neighborhoods. *His article, "America's Model Minority," appeared in our August 1990 issue.*

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sources to upgrade a Dickensian infrastructure and housing-space densities that would have given pause to Jacob Riis.

This nemesis of the crisis-monger entered his special vocation peaceably enough in 1965 with a popular and uncontroversial gloss on the 1960 census, *This U.S.A.* (in collaboration with Richard Scammon, then director of the Census Bureau). Not until *The Real America* (1974), in which a flight of statistical barbs was aimed at prickly political and policy issues, did Wattenberg's gladiatorial style fully emerge. It was there he exhibited his extraordinary talent at mobilizing from the recesses of governmental agencies, academia, and think tanks whole platoons and regiments of socioeconomic data, arrayed to lay low the untruths, and to round out the half-truths, of misguided or "politically correct" experts with well-grooved channels to a compliant press.

One of the more memorable offerings in that volume resurrected the "black family in crisis" thesis, earlier formulated by Daniel P. Moynihan. Applying richer and more detailed data than were hitherto available, Wattenberg demonstrated that for married couples the differential in black-white income had significantly narrowed, and conspicuously so for younger couples who came to maturity after the civil-rights revolution; indeed, young black couples with a college education had entirely wiped out the gap. He reported, too, the burgeoning number of blacks achieving elected office, more than a few in jurisdictions with white majorities. So much for the claims of intractable poverty and unabated discrimination. And, turning from his Left to smite the Right, so much too for pronouncements that government social programs were inherently wasteful or perversely harmful. (To this day Wattenberg is a loyal adherent of Lyndon B. Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, and Henry Jackson.)

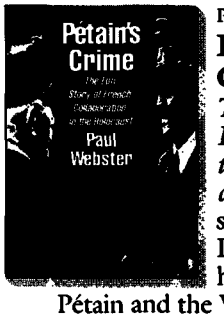
The title of Wattenberg's next big book, *The Good News Is the Bad News Is Wrong* (1984), epitomized his inveterate preoccupation. Summing up evidential numbers from researchers and survey polls, Wattenberg argued that if it was not quite morning in America—Reagan's victory had been achieved without benefit of Wattenberg's vote—neither was it exactly nighttime.

THEN, in 1987, in a startling reversal of character, Wattenberg published *The Birth Dearth.* Having earlier swung a steel ball at the edifice of chilling projections of an apocalyptic population explosion, now he warned at high pitch of a demographic debacle in the making. What disturbed Wattenberg were the (to him) irrefutable signs that the nations of the first world were condemning themselves to diminished, graying, and therefore enfeebled populations, with disastrous consequences for domestic and foreign policy. In developed countries, and notably in Japan and Europe, total fertility rates had fallen below the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman's lifetime. By contrast, the fertility rates of developing countries, though declining, were multiples of those in the West. And while the U.S. was ahead of Europe and Japan, that merely intimated a moderately delayed Armageddon.

Now in *The Universal Nation* Wattenberg has reverted to type: discarding the skies-are-falling mode, he argues that if all is not yet right with global demographics, it will be with America's. By his lights, the U.S. is well on its way to becoming a demographic powerhouse, quantitatively to a degree, qualitatively for certain. We are becoming the first polity in history to encompass within its borders a cross-section of the entire world, a universe compressed within a republic of 50 states.

Wattenberg's regained optimism—his new book heralds the dawn of an American century—is animated not only by reconsidered population trends but also by political and economic events. A few words about the former. Detailed analyses of U.S. fertility data indicate that we are unmistakably above the replacement rate, if not securely so. Immigration levels are coursing up, not down, contrary to the expectations of Congress when in 1986 it imposed heavy sanctions

Important history from Ivan R. Dee



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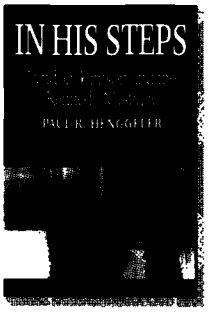

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on the employment of illegal aliens. Moreover, on top of the already high rates of entry under existing formulas, Congress recently enacted generous provisions that will raise total admissions close to the century's peak while tripling the flow of the educated, the skilled, and the financially competent.

Thus, not only a rising population but improved quality in the labor force—and by extension in the performance of the economy—is assured deep into the 21st century. Furthermore, America's generations of immigrants, new and old, are enthusiastically mingling. Outmarriage rates—consanguinity across ethnic categories—are relatively high for most groups other than blacks, and are steadily increasing for each successive generation. The outmarriage rate for Asians across racial lines is approaching the respective outmarriage rates of Catholics and Jews across religious lines. Wattenberg is plainly impatient with pronouncements about the unmeltable ethnics. The melting pot is at high heat, and ethnographers are delinquent in refusing to accord as much weight to the homogenized soup that fills the stewpot as to the dwindling masses of self-identifying melt-resistant ingredients. From all that demographic mixing Wattenberg draws much satisfaction, stout in the belief that America will grow stronger in the measure to which our Founding Fathers' motto, *E Pluribus Unum*, attains reality.

UNFORTUNATELY, Wattenberg's eponymous term, "First Universal Nation," is no model of lucidity, and his terse explication of that term does not help matters: "We are the first universal nation. 'First' as in the first one, 'first' as in 'number one.' And 'universal' within our borders and globally." My main difficulty, however, is not with the locution's clarity but with its substantiation.

I confess to a chronic uneasiness with transcendental ideas that presume to pierce the impenetrable veil of the future, and especially with those that purport to encapsulate the immense unknowabilities of the world into an epigrammatic sound bite. These confections tend to have a fleeting shelf life: witness the fate of the Decline of the West, Secular Stagnation, the Post-Industrial Society, Nuclear Winter, Our Plundered Planet, the End of History, Imperial Overstretch, and, ah yes, the Birth Dearth. Indeed, since the discomfiting of prognosticators has been, and remains, Wattenberg's own favorite sport, one is a little surprised by this confident venture into futurology. As a demographic interpreter Wattenberg has undisputed competence (though, as we have seen, not invincible standing—no one has). As an author of global scenarios for the next century he is no more credible than the next mortal.

Aside from conceptual overkill and the perils of excited prediction, *The First Universal Nation* fails to provide a persuasive or even sustained argument for its towering thesis. Wattenberg's explication is confined to a loosely developed chapter of fewer than twenty pages. He bases his case for America-as-universe on two contentions—demographic and geopolitical. Both suffer from an excess of hyperbole.

America's population, though growing steadily more polyethnic, does not constitute anything resembling a true cross-section of the globe's population. Nor will it do so as far ahead as any demographer can peer. America is 75 to 80 percent white in a world that is 75 to 80 percent nonwhite. To be sure, the growth rate of America's Asians is extraordinary, but it is measured from a very slender base. After a 25-year rising tide of immigration, Asian-Americans currently account for only 3 percent of the U.S. population and are not projected, in a world that is half-Asian, to pass 6 percent until well into the next century. In asserting that America is the demographic universe writ small, Wattenberg is asking us to ignore proportionalities and focus solely on rapidly proliferating racial and ethnic diversity. On that score, America achieved universality a century or more ago. By then, every racial and ethnic group from every nation and continent had a recognized presence here. Moreover, by Wattenberg's loose test of universality other nations are entitled to the designation, among them Brazil, Canada, and Israel, each a conspicuously multiracial, multiethnic society and becoming more so daily.

Wattenberg's second case for the nation-as-universe—the geopolitical—has roots in another Framers' motto, *Novus Ordo Seclorum*, a new order of the ages. With the collapse of the Soviet Union as a viable political and economic system, and with the triumph everywhere of market capitalism over statist socialism, a new world order is shaping up, bringing radical rearrangements in the correlation of forces (to salvage something from the Communist lexicon). The world according to Wattenberg is no longer bipolar but unipolar, and America is the pole, the sole and unchallenged superpower.

I have even more difficulty with this argument than with the demographic. The Soviet Union may be a collapsing empire and a downward-spiraling polity, but who seriously believes it is a failed military power? As one U.S. commander lately avowed, no country possessing a surfeit of nuclear "ordnance" capable within 30 minutes of reducing America to a moonscape can be safely stripped of its superpower epaulets.

BEYOND its brief and inadequate thematic chapter, the remainder of this 400-page book is a pastiche of more than a hundred of Wattenberg's syndicated newspaper columns, published from the early 80's through mid-1990. The topics range over the environment, presidential elections, definitions of poverty, and much more. Most show Wattenberg at his debunking best, but with a few exceptions these discrete musings bear only obliquely on his central theme and build no solid scaffold in its support.

Wattenberg is always fun to read, and the positive nature of his reporting, amid a journalistic culture of nattering negativism, has inestimable scarcity value. But the rewards of the book taken as a whole owe more to the cut and thrust of a miscellany of public-policy jousts, here commodiously and conveniently reprinted, than to the epochal event connoted in its grandiloquent title.

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The Little Prince

IRON JOHN: A BOOK ABOUT MEN. By ROBERT BLY. *Addison-Wesley. 268 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by CHARLOTTE ALLEN

ROBERT BLY, the award-winning poet who lives in Minnesota, is one of the leaders of the "men's movement," the latest in self-help fashions. Imitating the Mother Goddess rituals practiced by *outré* feminists, gangs of male lawyers, professors, and others from the genteel classes meet in groups or, preferably, head for the woods. There they mimic but do not exactly recapitulate primeval hunting rituals. Most men in the movement, including Bly himself, consider the act of personally killing one's dinner to be distasteful, and some are undoubtedly vegetarians. So instead of shooting, there is dancing, whooping, beating of drums, chanting to deities from a variety of creeds, hugging of trees, and just plain hugging. There is also much weeping, as men unveil psychic blows dealt them during their childhoods by their fathers and their mothers and the problems they currently endure in their "relationships" with the tough-husked liberated women of the late 20th century.

Although their rites seem laughable, Bly and the others—as the huge sales of this best-selling book suggest—are actually onto something important. The men's movement is a reaction to a systematic denigration of male society and masculine virtue that has accompanied the rise of feminism over the past two-and-a-half decades. Indeed, most feminists are as suspicious of men's groups as they are of all other men-only institutions, though Bly goes out of his way to appease them, emphasizing over and over that his book, which attempts to instruct men on their manhood, "does not constitute a challenge to the women's movement."

As Bly points out, it has become increasingly difficult for boys to learn from men how to become men. He estimates that from 20 to 30 percent of boys grow up in households without an adult man present, a figure that seems quite plausible, given current divorce and illegitimacy rates. Civil-rights statutes, litigation, and relentless social pressure have made it almost dead certain that boys will be in coeducational classrooms from kindergarten through graduate school. Their teachers, guidance counselors, social workers, and even Boy Scout leaders are likely to be female. All-male organizations? They have almost all been forced to accept women or are bound to do so in the near future, from the august Century Club in Manhattan to the humblest small-town Rotary chapter. Because we now prolong adolescence—that is to say, childhood—well into the twenties, traditional religious rites of initiation into adult life, such as confirmation and bar mitzvah, have lost most of their cultural significance.

Bly, as might be expected, is not particularly sympathetic to the claims of either Judaism or Christianity, which require their adherents to worship one transcendent God and to obey a set of moral precepts that Bly deems repressive. He prefers something less demanding. "Religion here does not mean doctrine or purity or 'faith' or 'belief,' or my life given to God," he writes. Bly is a student of Joseph Campbell, the recently deceased and hugely fashionable popularizer of Jung. In the world of Jung and Campbell, there is no transcendent God. All the religious myths and stories that human cultures have devised are versions of a few simple archetypes that describe the workings of the subjective psyche rather than an objective metaphysical reality outside the self.

Thus, for Bly, one god is as good as any other, for none exists in the objective world. Anyone can believe in all of them. Religion is simply a form of autotherapy. He loads his book with references to gods and heroes, myths and fairy tales from every human society from Sumer and Akkad to Papua New Guinea, jumbling them together: the Virgin Mary alongside Demeter and Isis; Jacob and Esau alongside wily Odysseus and the Fisher King. No culture's religion is too remote in time or place for Bly.

Iron John derives its title from a Grimm's fairy tale, whose prolonged exegesis by Bly forms the spine of his book. The tale, about a boy's growth to manhood, is a wonderful one that lives up to Bly's billing (though, as we shall see, he spoils it with a reductive interpretation). Here it is, stripped to bare essentials:

Not far from a king's castle is a forest from which hunters, when they enter, do not return. People eventually figure out that whoever is devouring the hunters lives at the bottom of a large pond in the forest. The king's men drain the pond. There they find a huge hairy wild man with skin the color of a rusty nail. He is "Iron John." They take him back to the palace and imprison him in a cage in the courtyard.

One day the king's eight-year-old son comes out to the courtyard to play, and Iron John grabs his golden ball. He says he will return the ball only if the boy steals the key to the cage and unlocks it. The boy does so but is afraid his parents will punish him. So Iron John takes him back to the forest with him to live. He puts the boy in charge of guarding another pond in his domain in which all creatures swimming about are made of gold. The boy is not supposed to let anything fall into the pond. But while he is staring down at his reflection, his long hair tumbles into the water and turns gold. Iron John tells him he can no longer live with him but says the boy should call on him if ever he needs anything.

The boy wanders about in a neighboring kingdom and nearly starves, but finally finds menial work in the palace, first as a kitchen helper, then as a gardener's assistant. He wears a cap on his head to hide his golden hair. Years pass. One hot day, while he is hoeing the garden, the youth takes off his cap and the glint of his hair catches the eye of the king's daughter, who orders the gardener to send the boy up with flowers for her. When he arrives with a bouquet, she pulls off his cap and his hair showers down. She gives him some gold

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CHARLOTTE ALLEN *is a senior editor at* Insight *magazine.*

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pieces, which he refuses to keep, turning them over to the gardener's children.

Some time later, the king is at war, and his enemies are winning. The youth wants to fight, but his fellow workers only laugh at him, giving him a crippled old horse for a steed. Uncomplaining, he rides to the edge of the forest and calls on Iron John. The wild man takes the youth's lame nag and gives him a fine steed, a set of armor, and a troop of iron knights to lead. The youth and his knights ride to the battle and save the day. Then, without identifying himself, he leads them back to the forest, where he exchanges them and his fine horse for the lame nag. He resumes his gardening job.

To lure the mystery knight, the king arranges for a festival at which his daughter will throw a golden apple for a young man to catch three days running. Again, the youth calls on Iron John, who over the three days supplies him with a chestnut horse, a white horse, and a black horse, all with matching suits of armor. He catches the apple each day. The first two days he succeeds in riding off without identifying himself, but on the third day the king's men briefly stop him, wounding him in the leg and pulling off his helmet so that his golden hair falls down before he gets away.

The king's daughter remembers the hair and questions the gardener, who recalls that the victorious young man showed his children the golden apples he had caught. The king summons the youth to his presence, and says it is clear he is no mere gardener's helper. The young man explains that he is a king's son and has all the gold he needs. The king asks him if there is any favor he can do for him. The young man says there is: he would like the king's daughter for his wife.

The story ends with the wedding, where the young prince's mother and father, who thought their son was dead, are joyfully reunited with him. Another king arrives. He is Iron John, who had been turned into a wild man by a spell. The spell is now broken.

It is easy to see that this story, on its own terms and without embellishments, tells a boy all the virtues he needs to cultivate to become a man. The youth works diligently and without shame at the lowliest of jobs. He is loyal to his sovereign and to his employer. He is brave in battle. He is kind to children. He endures ridicule patiently and does not boast of his achievements. He is self-reliant, running to Iron John only when there is something he cannot provide for himself. When it comes time to go courting, he courts with style and dispatch. The story presents an objective reality in which even the magic is as matter-of-fact as the flowers the boy picks for the girl.

Robert Bly, however, is not interested in the objective world in which one becomes a man by doing manly things. For just as religion is a form of autotherapy for Bly, so is literature. He concentrates strictly on the subjective, treating the Grimm tale solely as a vehicle for adult self-exploration. In fact, says Bly, all the characters in the Grimm story—the wild man, the warrior, the king—are merely symbols of "interior beings" that live inside every mature man's psyche. Bly makes much of the hidden meaning of the boy's first kitchen job, inventing a new bit of psychobabble—"ashes work"—as a generic for setbacks and periods of depression and grief. He explores at length the possible symbolism of the chestnut, white, and black horses. Some of this is interesting, if not especially relevant; most of it is pretty tedious.

In Bly's view, one achieves manhood not by supporting a family or signing up for the 101st Airborne but by heading for the therapist's couch or the men's group to get in touch with one's interior king or warrior. As a method of literary analysis, Bly's approach is deadly, flattening out characters, robbing stories of their resonance and wonder, and taking the fun out of reading. As a guide for living it is paralyzing.

Bly the poet clearly feels the power of the tale of Iron John, the same power felt by the German yarn-spinners who retold it for hundreds of years and by the broth-

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ers Grimm who wrote it down. But Bly cannot take the story straight. That is because he, and perhaps most men in the men's movement, do not believe that any of the manly deeds the young man does is worth doing. Here is what Bly has to say about serving in the military:

> Contemporary war, with its mechanical and heartless destruction, has made the heat of aggression seem disgraceful. Ares is not present on the contemporary battlefield. The Vietnam veterans suffered soul damage in that they went into battle imagining they served a warrior god, and came back out of it godless.

Bly makes other faintly contemptuous remarks about playing football, liking cars, and other male pursuits of this era.

ONE might say that Bly has a bad case of post-Vietnam malaise. But he suffers from another, even more devastating, ailment: the belief, common to intellectuals, that this century is somehow radically different from all that have preceded it. In particular, he believes there is no such thing nowadays as objective reality, let alone transcendent objective reality. There are logical problems with this position—if reality is purely subjective, it is of course impossible to assert that reality is purely subjective.

But there is a worse problem. In their efforts to create a mythology that is purely subjective and thus malleable to modernity, or to adapt old myths and religions to subjective ends, people like Bly end up draining the old stories and beliefs of their vitality. The ancient Greeks told and retold myths about Zeus not because Zeus was a symbolic name for the "Zeus energy" inside each of them, as Bly calls it, but because they believed that Zeus existed in the transcendent world, that he was one of the immortal gods whose awesome powers they honored in dramas that were liturgical in function. One reason Jung seems a more convincing writer than Campbell or Bly is that, unlike them, Jung paid full tribute to the objective vitality of the religious myths he wrote about.

Besides killing off post-Vietnam malaise, the Gulf War demonstrated that perhaps the 20th century has not been so different after all. The soldier's bible in the Gulf turned out to be Sun-tzu's *Art of War*, written during the 6th century B.C.E. A viewing of Kenneth Branagh's film *Henry V* suggests that medieval warfare was no less gruesome than that of today. So it may be that even men in the men's movement will discover that the surer way to forge a sense of strong and positive masculine identity is to practice the old masculine virtues than to run through the forest in search of one's interior warrior. Women will certainly find them more appealing if they do. A headline in the *National Enquirer* a few weeks ago read: "Stormin' Norman Schwarzkopf—Sexiest Man in America."

Above the Constitution?

OPENING ARGUMENTS: A YOUNG LAWYER'S FIRST CASE. By JEFFREY TOOBIN. *Viking. 374 pp. $22.95.*

Reviewed by TERRY EASTLAND

IN LATE 1986 a special court named Lawrence E. Walsh as the independent counsel for investigating and prosecuting crimes stemming from the Iran-*contra* affair. Soon thereafter Jeffrey Toobin, a recent graduate of Harvard Law School and a former intern at the *New Republic*, quit a clerkship to a federal judge to become, at age twenty-six, the youngest member of Walsh's staff. Inspired by the example of the Watergate special prosecutors, and like many of his new colleagues perched politically to the Left, Toobin understood his job as a crusade:

> We would take on Reagan and all the President's men, with their contempt for the Constitution, disdain for the Congress, and hostility to the truth. . . . We had nothing less than a blank check to uncover and rectify the misdeeds of a corrupt and dishonorable administration. We wouldn't stop until we reached the top.

Of course, the Office of Independent Counsel (OIC) stopped well short of President Reagan, although after four-plus years it has yet to close down. Toobin, now an assistant U.S. Attorney in New York, worked in the office until May 4, 1989, the same day a federal jury convicted Oliver North on three of twelve counts; the convictions were later overturned on appeal. *Opening Arguments* is an inside account of the OIC's efforts during that time by its most junior member.

Toobin has little feel for the contours of constitutional law or the purpose of the presidency in our system of government, nor is he learned in foreign affairs, whether in the Middle East or Central America. Toobin's publisher touts the book as containing "undisclosed revelations," such as that the CIA bribed officials in Costa Rica to help resupply the *contras*. Toobin, however, says he has never thought of his book as a revelatory work but as a narrative about his own growth as a lawyer. And indeed, this is the main theme of *Opening Arguments*.

By the end of the book, Toobin is still a liberal (U.S. policy in Central America is "reprehensible," he writes, ignoring the Nicaraguan election results last spring); but he is no longer the zealous crusader. He dwells, now, on the "futility of using the criminal process to expose or correct governmental misdeeds," noting that he has come to embrace a "more modest conception of the OIC mission"—that it should stick to enforcing specific statutes, nothing more. "Only crimes are crimes," he says, cautioning, correctly, that prosecutors "thinking broadly put all of us at peril." In the end he confesses: "Gone is the desire—much less the expectation—for my work to change the course of history, but I celebrate, rather than regret, my enlightenment. I know better my own limits and those of all prosecutors."

TERRY EASTLAND, *resident fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, contributed "Impeachment by Other Means" to the August 1989* COMMENTARY. *He is the author of* Ethics, Politics, and the Independent Counsel (1989).

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THE world is no doubt a safer place now that Jeffrey Toobin has discovered that only crimes are crimes—something he was apparently never taught at Harvard Law School. But a central question raised by his book is whether he learned all he should have learned. When he left the OIC in 1989 Toobin agreed, in writing, that anything he produced for publication would be submitted first for review, to make sure it did not violate the criminal prohibition against publicizing grand-jury information or divulge other confidential matters. Walsh, reviewing Toobin's book, refused to approve it. Toobin sued, charging prior restraint. A federal judge sided with Toobin, finding no grand-jury leaks and no other secrets worth protecting (thereby undermining Viking's claims about "revelations"). Walsh appealed, but Viking published anyway.

As Toobin well knows, however, what is legal is not necessarily right. His book egregiously violates professional standards. Toobin alleges, for example, that former Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams, who has not been prosecuted by Walsh's office, told "a flat-out, bald-faced lie" in congressional testimony; he then writes that "the evidence [for proving a crime] . . . fell short." No prosecutor, however, has any business discussing *possible* crimes in any forum other than a court of law. Toobin has defended his outrageous defamation of Abrams by suggesting in interviews that because Abrams is a public figure, he is "fair game." I cannot imagine that is a principle Toobin would seriously wish to defend, and I doubt that his current employer—the Justice Department—would allow him to give press conferences (much less write books) explaining the reasons for the non-prosecution of individuals he has investigated, or impugning their characters, no matter how well known they might be.

It is, of course, true that the results of independent-counsel investigations are supposed to be made public, in accord with the terms of statute itself. That happens to be one of many flaws in the independent-counsel law—the reporting requirement itself violates professional standards. But even assuming its propriety, it is Walsh, not Toobin, who is authorized to write the report that a special court would then release to the public. A book by Toobin or anyone else on the staff should come *after* Walsh's report.

TOOBIN was a young man in a hurry. His chapters on the North trial are eyewitness accounts of the proceedings, but it is clear that on most days he was not at the prosecution table but in the audience where, I am told, he took notes as though he were just another reporter. Quite apart from the government-ethics question of why the citizenry should have been paying Toobin's (huge) salary while he pursued a lucrative private interest (this book), and the managerial question of why Walsh did not supervise his rookie lawyer, one wonders whether Toobin joined the OIC to crusade or to make a name for himself. An answer may lie in the documents sought by Walsh in the lawsuit Toobin brought against him. Among those documents were Toobin's own diaries; in the entry for April 28, 1989 Toobin confides that his debriefing session that day

> scared the hell out of me because I realized it would be *Walsh* reviewing my book, not some faceless bureaucrat. I was seized by fear—really since the first time I thought about this project—that it might not happen. *Then* what would I do? What would I tell Amy [his wife]? Myself? I sulked.

Interestingly, though he comes to side with the more traditionally-minded of the OIC staff, Toobin does not really attack any of his former colleagues. Moreover, he has publicly disagreed with those who say that his book shows what is wrong with the Walsh investigation. He may be off the squad, but it is still his team. Yet the team still deserves far more public scrutiny than it has received to date.

Toobin reveals the division within the OIC on whether North and others should have been charged with conspiring to violate the Boland amendment, a civil law that restricted U.S. government aid to

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the *contras*. He quotes one lawyer as saying: "Charging a violation of the Boland amendment is not fair." Yet the OIC under Walsh's leadership sought and won an indictment of North on precisely that charge. As it turned out, North could not be tried on it because of the law governing the use of classified materials in criminal proceedings, which requires the prosecution to consult with intelligence agencies in advance. The OIC failed to do that, according to Toobin, and was in any event unprepared for "classified-information problems." If that is so, Walsh must explain why he forged ahead with the Boland-conspiracy case when fairness and an appreciation for national-security concerns argued against it.

He must also explain why he prosecuted North and John Poindexter at all, given the fact both had testified in Congress under grants of immunity; as the U.S. Attorneys' manual (quoted by Toobin) advises, "successful prosecution" of such an immunized congressional witness "would usually be extremely difficult." The problem of immunity has turned out to be the rock on which the Walsh ship has foundered; the North convictions were overturned on immunity grounds. Toobin also says that in the event President Reagan had pardoned North, Walsh was prepared to argue the remarkable point that a presidential pardon *before* conviction is invalid. This, notwithstanding the fact that the Constitution places the pardon power, without qualification, in the hands of the President. Was Walsh putting himself above the Constitution?

THE independent-counsel law is an anomaly in our system of government. Court-appointed counsels have even more power than the Attorney General. They can serve forever—Walsh has now been in office longer than any Attorney General in four decades—and they have unlimited resources (Walsh has already spent at least $25 million). As Walsh did Jeffrey Toobin (a fact unreported in this book), they can pay twenty-six-year-olds more than $70,000, twice as much as a beginning attorney can earn at the Justice Department. Removed from the constraints of a normal prosecutorial environment, they do not have to pick and choose among cases, but can exhaustively pursue a single one, for as long as they like, regardless of the damage done to other considerations, including fairness to individuals and national security. They are accountable really to no one in the elective branches.

The independent-counsel law expires on its own terms in 1992. Congress would be wise not to reauthorize it. For many reasons Toobin's book should be the first and last memoir written by an OIC lawyer.

First Citizen

PERICLES OF ATHENS AND THE BIRTH OF DEMOCRACY. By DONALD KAGAN. *The Free Press. 287 pp. $22.50.*

Reviewed by ROGER KIMBALL

IN PART a biography of the famous Athenian statesman and general, Donald Kagan's masterly *Pericles of Athens and the Birth of Democracy* is also a concise introduction to the political life of Athens in the 5th century B.C.E.—its moment of greatest glory and greatest peril—as well as a sober meditation on the meaning of the Athenian experiment in democracy for us at the end of the 20th century.

As the author of a magisterial four-volume history of the Peloponnesian War,* Kagan, a professor of classics at Yale and also dean of Yale College, is well prepared for the task of explicating the career of Pericles. It should be said at the outset, however, that while *Pericles of Athens* could only have been written by someone deeply immersed in the historical intricacies of his subject, the book is not a scholarly tome but a lively historical narrative, popular in the best sense of the word. Kagan wears his learning lightly, and has produced an engaging and informative book which brings to life both Pericles and classical Athens itself.

Yet Kagan in no way sentimentalizes his subject by recasting the Greek *polis* in the image of 20th-century representative democracy. On the contrary, he often reminds the reader that, at a distance of more than two millennia, there is much about Periclean Athens that cannot but seem forbiddingly strange and even, at times, scarcely comprehensible. But as an important source of our political institutions, our models of aesthetic excellence, and, indeed, our conceptions of human nobility and the rational pursuit of the good life, the experience of classical Athens and its leading citizen provide a lesson in democracy that cannot be ignored.

WHEN Pericles was born, circa 494, democracy in Athens was scarcely a decade old, having been established in the decade before 500 by his mother's uncle, the great statesman Cleisthenes. This unprecedented venture in political self-determination was carried forward by a handful of distinguished military and political leaders, notably Themistocles and Pericles' first important political rival, Cimon. But it was Pericles himself who, in the 450's, brought Athenian democracy to its apogee, placing the political control of the city-state directly in the hands of its citizens and instructing them in the rigors of autonomy.

Today we are often reminded by critics of classical Greece and of the West generally that democracy in Athens was flawed because citizenship, and consequently political power, was not extended to every native who had attained majority. The Greeks (like virtually all ancient civilizations) held slaves, and (again, like virtually all ancient and most modern civilizations until very recently) they excluded women from public life and political power. Of the approximately 250,000 people living in greater Athens in the 5th century, only some 40,000 were citizens: about a

ROGER KIMBALL *is the managing editor of the* New Criterion.

* Reviewed by Edward N. Luttwak in COMMENTARY, March 1989.—ED

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sixth of the population exercised political power.

Nevertheless, in political as in other matters, what makes Periclean Athens of imperishable interest are not the things it had in common with other civilizations—a list that includes slavery and misogyny—but the things that set it apart. Although political power was not extended to women or slaves, the Athenian assembly established a constitution and government that in many ways was as radically democratic as any in history. (When democracy was rediscovered some two thousand years later, it was, as Kagan notes, "broader but shallower.")

In Athens, most public officials were selected by lot; a special handful were elected for short terms by direct vote of the citizens, who held their leaders strictly accountable for public expenditures and the conduct of government. The citizens themselves, not officials elected to represent them, gathered on a hill in Athens called the Pnyx to debate the issues of the day. They allocated public funds, voted on domestic policies, decided whether to wage war or sue for peace. Under Pericles' influence, public offices became paid positions for the first time, a development that "gave the average man a degree of leisure unknown in other states" and that effectively opened up the government to even the poorest of Athenian citizens.

In this context, it is worth noting that the commitment to political democracy in Periclean Athens did not conflict with the zealous commitment to excellence in every sphere of human endeavor. This, too, was part of Pericles' genius. If the Athenians were political egalitarians, under Pericles' tutelage they became human elitists. In matters of virtue and accomplishment—on the playing field or battleground, in the theater or the artist's studio—they believed in hierarchy, not sameness. For them, democracy was worthy because it recognized and fostered talent, not because it assured homogeneity.

Putting it in contemporary terms, we might say that the Athenians inspired by Pericles advocated equality of opportunity, not equality of result. Accordingly, their idea of democracy did not imply an effort to erase differences among citizens. Neither social engineering nor the redistribution of wealth was part of the Athenian vision of democracy. As Kagan notes, "although political equality was a fundamental principle of democracy, economic equality had no place in the Athens of Pericles."

GIVEN the length, influence, and brilliance of Pericles' political career—he entered politics in 463 and by 440 or so was without effective rival—we sometimes forget that he was not a king or even anything like what we would call a president or prime minister. He was merely one of ten *strategoi*, or generals, who were elected for one-year terms and were subject to constant review and rebuke by the people they served. This was the only formal office he ever held, and, as Kagan emphasizes, his tenure "depended entirely on the continued and freely expressed support of the Athenian people." In times of national emergency—a contingency, alas, that Athens had to face many times—Pericles persuaded his fellow citizens to suspend or abridge democratic debate in order to deal more effectively with the immediate threat. But full democratic participation was promptly restored as soon as the threat receded.

Notwithstanding Pericles' allegiance to the principle of political equality, there can be no doubt that he emerged as *primus inter pares*, first among equals. In this sense, there is more than a little truth in Thucydides' observation that while Athens was a democracy in name, it was really government by the first citizen. Or perhaps we should say that the direct democracy of Periclean Athens required charismatic leaders in order to ensure the conditions that made liberty and democracy possible. "The paradox inherent in democracy," Kagan writes in his introduction, "is that it must create and depend on citizens who are free, autonomous, and self-reliant. Yet its success—its survival even—requires extraordinary leadership."

Pericles' bold policies surely contributed to his success. But so did his persistence, force of character, and prodigious rhetorical skill. As in any real democracy, where persuasion is a more important tool of political power than brute force, rhetoric counted for a great deal in classical Athens. And by all accounts, Pericles was a dazzlingly effective orator. One of his political opponents, a wrestler, complained that "Whenever I throw him, he argues that he was not thrown and convinces the very people who saw the fall."

Pericles' role in consolidating and extending democracy would have been enough to assure him an honored place in the history books. But it was his role as promoter of Athenian glory that made his name virtually a household word and rendered the phrase "Periclean Athens" a synonym for the harmonious union of political freedom and cultural excellence. This, after all, is the city that, over the course of several decades, was home to Aeschylus, Sophocles, Aristophanes, and Euripides, to Phidias and Praxiteles, to Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, to Herodotus and Thucydides, and many others. More than any other individual, it was Pericles who was responsible for encouraging the explosion of activity in architecture, literature, philosophy, and the visual arts, as well as in science, mathematics, and rhetoric, that made 5th-century Athens a permanent touchstone of public creative achievement.

"HERO" is the title of Kagan's penultimate chapter, and there can be no doubt that the portrait of Pericles drawn in his book is the portrait of a hero. But there can be no doubt, either, that Pericles emerges in the end not as a triumphant but as a tragic hero—a figure, as Kagan concludes, "who brought his people low by his own heroic intransigence." The great shadow that clouded his last years (he died in 429) was the Peloponnesian War, which broke out in 431 and dragged on, through intermittent truces, until a succession of disasters led to the destruction of the Athenian empire and Athens' surrender to Sparta in 404.

Things could hardly have gone

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worse for the proud city-state or its leader. When the war began, Pericles had, with much difficulty, persuaded the Athenians to abandon their farms to the rampaging Spartans and take refuge inside the city walls. This meant that when a plague swept the city the following year, its effects were all the more devastating: within a year, a third of the population was dead. One of its victims was Pericles himself. Before his death, Pericles suffered an incredible string of misfortunes. He was removed from office, fined, and disgraced; one of his sons publicly denounced him; two of his sons, his sister, and several relatives died in the plague. Although he was eventually voted back into office, he was by then too weak to stem the tide of chaos engulfing his beloved Athens.

It may be that Pericles could have avoided war with Sparta; it may also be that, had Athens had the benefit of his military acumen a few years longer, the war would have been over much sooner, with Athens victorious. In any event, it seems clear that what Kagan calls Pericles' "superhuman confidence," the hubris of his inordinate trust in reason, played an important part in his downfall—as well as in the downfall of Athens itself.

It is wrong, though, to conclude on this melancholy note. If "Pericles, no less than his city, was like a tragic hero," the heroic aspects of his achievement outshine the tragic consequences of his intransigence. Two passages from *Pericles of Athens* may be said to sum up the two complementary lessons of this thoughtful book. The first is an encomium; the second is an admonition.

Near the end of his book, Kagan reflects on the nobility of Pericles' ambition. "The Periclean vision," he writes,

> valued intelligence and talent and was not embarrassed to reward both with public honor. It cherished the arts as a powerful force for public education and as a delight in themselves. It reconciled the tension between liberty and equality by rejecting the imposition of equality by state control (as in Sparta), and insisting on freedom of opportunity as the road to both equality and honor. It was a vision of a democracy that sought not to reduce all aspects of life to the lowest common level but aimed at excellence for the individual as well as for the state. It demanded participation and sacrifice from its citizens while retaining a wide space for private activities where the state had no claim. It recognized the right of each citizen to pursue his own road to happiness at the same time that it required him to respect the needs of his fellow-citizens and of the community as a whole. This is a vision of timeless value.

The second passage, the admonition, has an even more pointed contemporary application:

> The recent rejections of despotic Communist regimes all over Eastern Europe and the widespread demand for their replacement by some form of democracy have led many observers to think that the victory liberal democracy has won is permanent. Most of the nations seeking democratic governments, however, have little or no experience with such a polity, and few people understand how difficult a system it is to create and maintain. Meanwhile, the modern champions of democracy seem unable to provide the intellectual and spiritual support it needs because they have lost sight of its first principles.
>
> Although in our time democracy is taken for granted, it is in fact one of the rarest, most delicate, and fragile flowers in the jungle of human experience.

It is part of Donald Kagan's accomplishment in *Pericles of Athens* to have communicated both the glory and the arduousness of democracy. As Pericles put it in his famous funeral oration, "happiness requires freedom and freedom requires courage."

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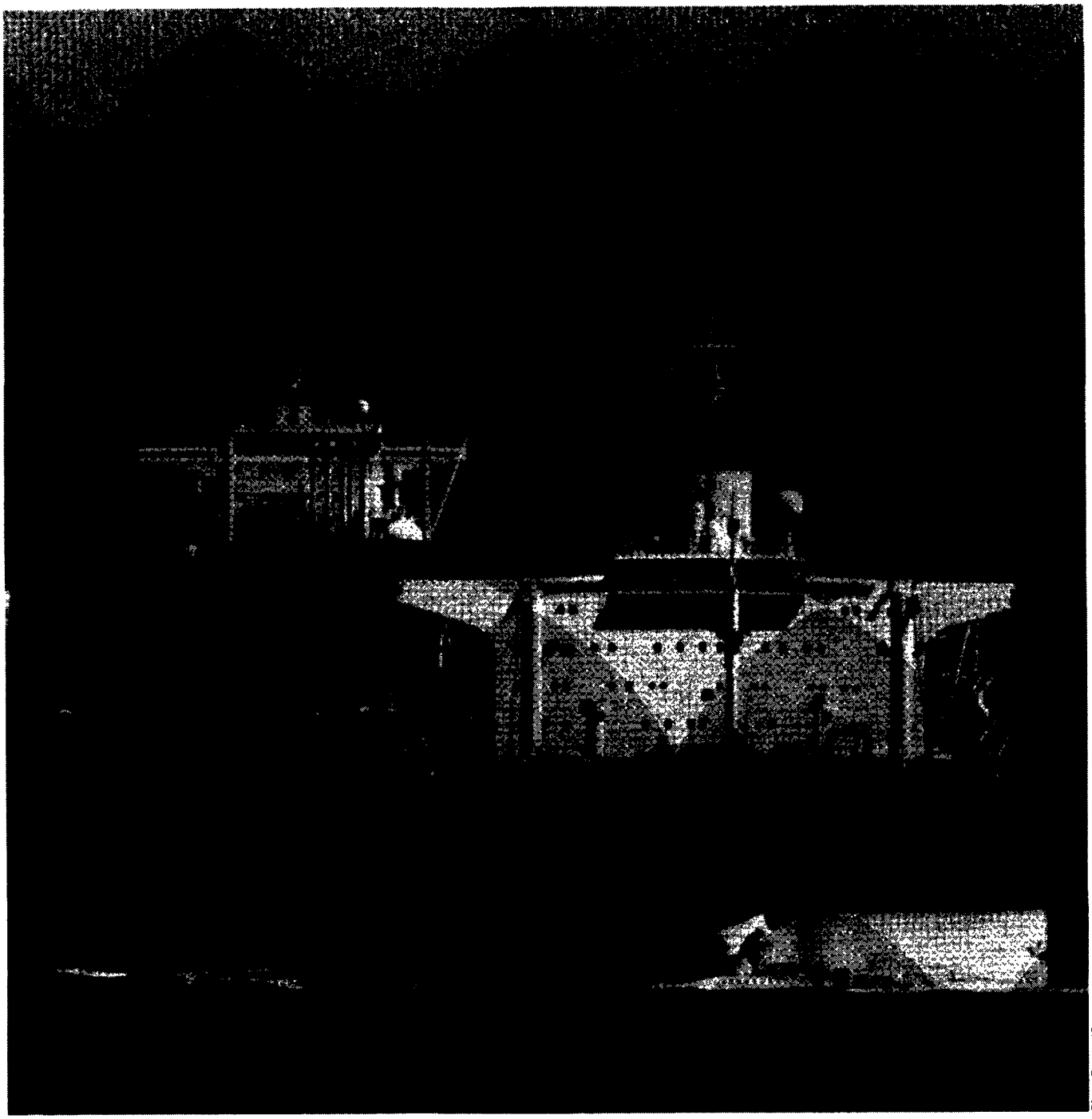

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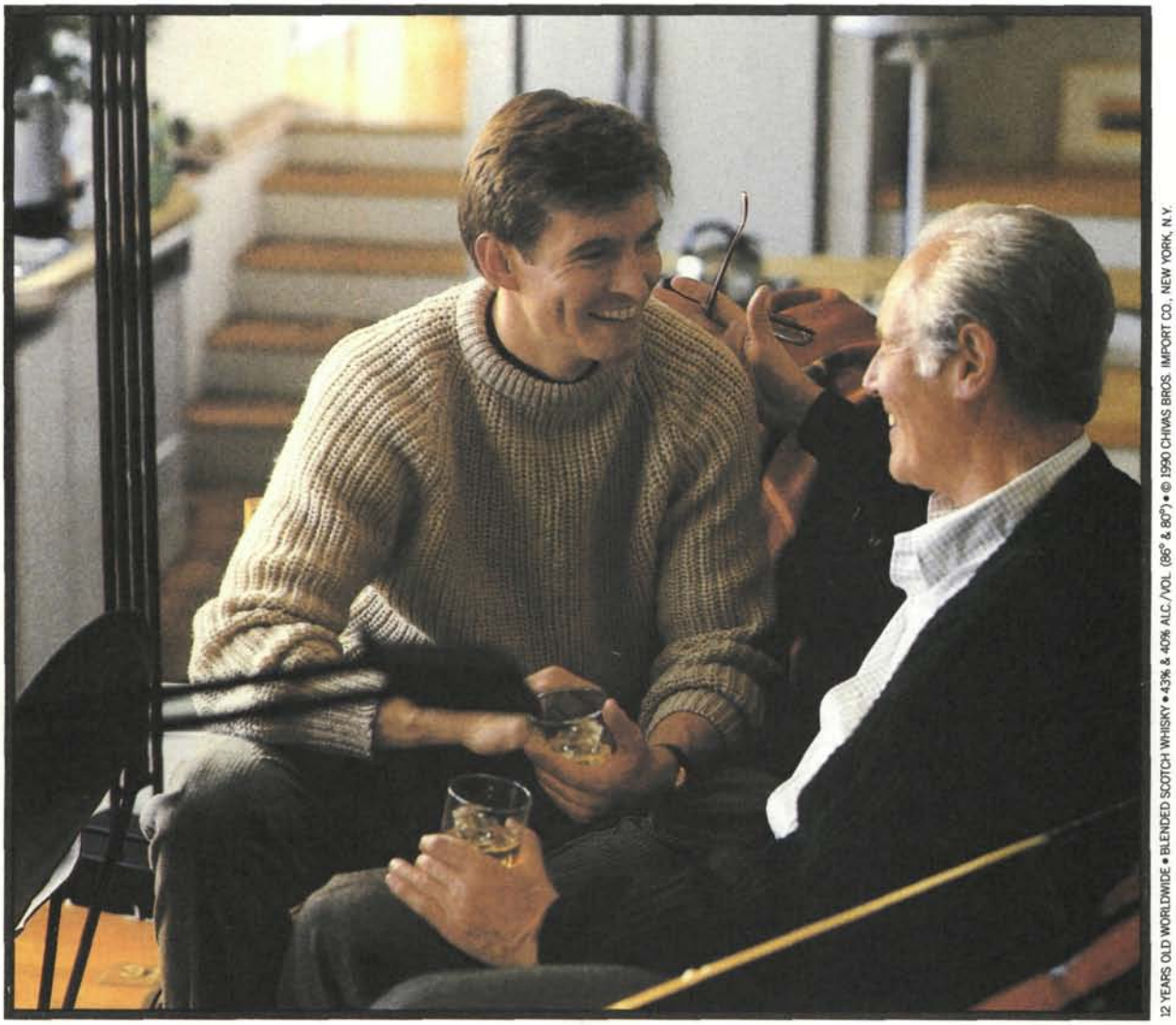

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